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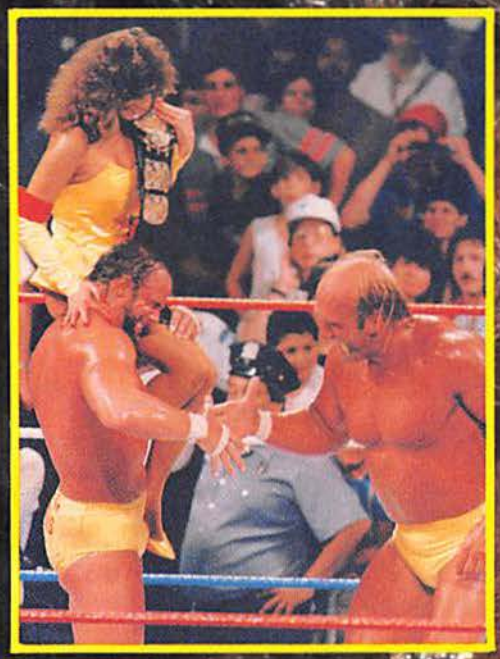

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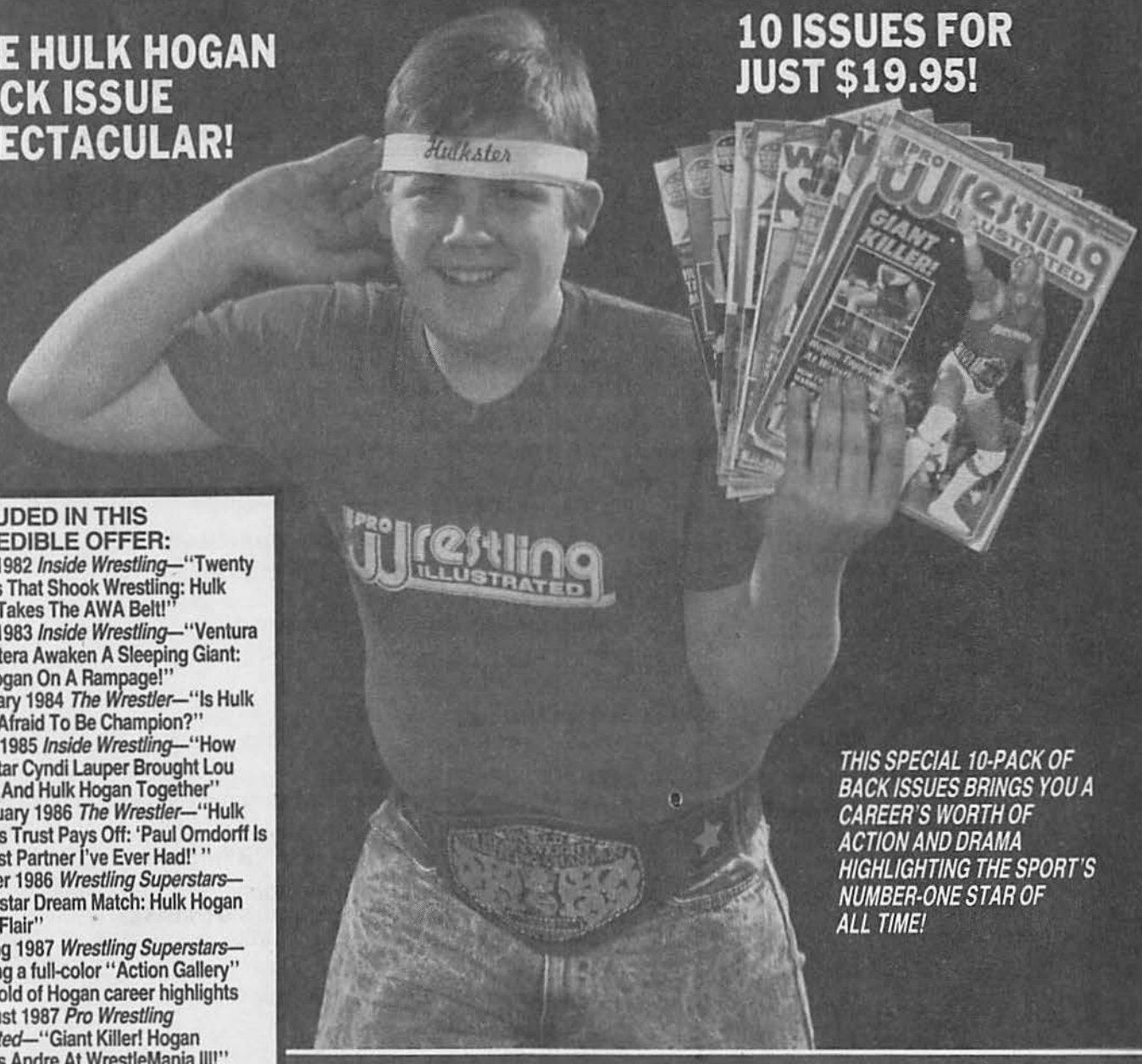

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Pro Wrestling Illustrated is published monthly by T.V. Sports Inc., Box 48, Rockville Centre, N.Y., 11571. For advertising queries: (516) 764-0300. Single copy price: $2.25 ($2.95 in Canada, £1.50 in U.K.). We are not responsible for the loss or nonreturn of unsolicited articles or photographs, which will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope bearing the proper amount of postage. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.
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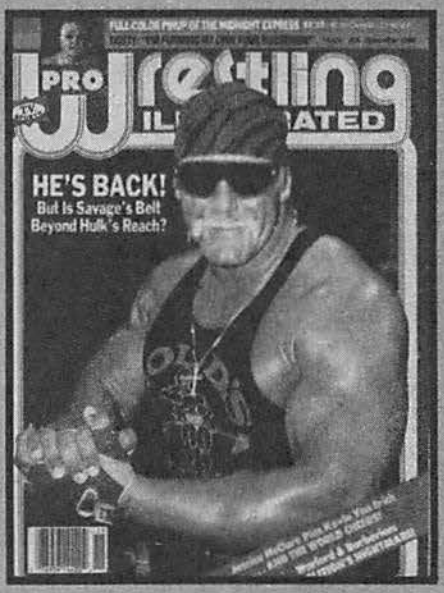
HE'S BACK . . .

I am writing to condemn *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* for its November 1988 cover story, "He's Back! But Is Savage's Belt Beyond Hulk's Reach?" As it turns out, your usually reputable journalism abandoned you. Only *half* of that headline is correct. Sure, Hogan's back. But the belt "out of his reach"? You have to be kidding!

I've never seen "The Hulkster" in better shape. He's wrestling with renewed vigor and has consistently been victorious since his return. The victory of The Megapowers at SummerSlam 88 is testimony to the rebirth of Hogan.

Comparing Hogan to Rick Steamboat is, I think, completely unfair. For one thing, Steamboat was not the wrestler Hogan is. For another thing, Steamboat allowed himself to be distracted by the birth of his son. This won't happen to Hogan. He's too committed to wrestling.

I'm sure Hogan will get title shots if he wants them. I think, however, that instead of damaging the internal harmony of The



Megapowers, Hulk will opt to avoid a direct challenge to Savage's belt and be content with being the popular ex-champion. He'll still be the stuff of main events for years to come.

Although standing in the shadows is not a role "The Hulkster" has played for many years, I'm sure he will be content to do just that throughout Savage's title reign.

ANNE ROCHER
Sandwich, MA

. . . BUT WHO CARES?

Sure, Hulk Hogan is back. "Back and better than ever," most fans will say. I am *not* one of those fans. I thought your November 1988 cover story took the perfect tone. Without actually saying it, your article subtly implied that people are happy with Savage as champion. I know *I* am.

Savage is simply a more exciting wrestler. And remember, Hogan won't get title shots. There's that unwritten WWF rule about two fan favorites meeting. And these are not just fan favorites. These are the two wrestlers who make up the most awesome tag team ever, The Megapowers.

Your article also correctly drew the parallel between Hogan and Rick Steamboat. Both were champions, both were fan favorites, and both had children. In the end, both faded from the public eye because they couldn't juggle domestic life with the mat wars. I won't miss Hogan.

PERRY RIANHARD
Branford, CT

WWF WIMPS? NO WAY!

I know how everyone has put down the WWF for being "the wimp federation," and for being more interested in providing entertainment than wrestling. But it seems to me that the WWF is the only federation that doesn't have a spineless jellyfish running it.

Every federation except the WWF has a stupid rule that if a wrestler throws another wrestler over the top rope, the wrestler is disqualified. Oh, are the federations worried that their precious wrestlers might hurt themselves? Too bad! The ring is not the place for weak little boys.

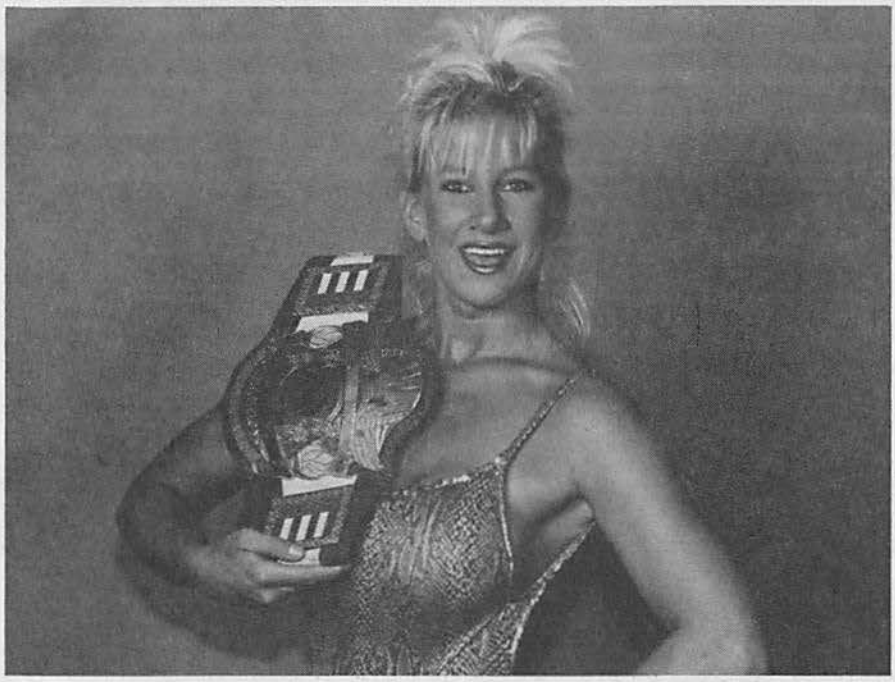
If the WWF had this rule, I'm sure Randy Savage would still be a preliminary wrestler, because he would always be disqualified. "The Macho Man" has made an art of throwing wrestlers over the top rope.

So before you speak out against the WWF, take a look at the rulebooks. Then you will see why the WWF is the only *real* wrestling federation.

MARK MacKINNON
Petawawa, Ontario

SOME TRAGEDY

"Tragedy" has struck the NWA again. It seems that The Rock 'n'



AWA World women's champion Madusa Miceli is the only major women's titlist who defends her belt on a regular basis, writes Jennifer Wick, a big fan of women in wrestling.

Roll Express has split up. Time for their fans to bring out their crying towels. I won't bother. In fact, I'm *pleased* they've broken up. Let's just hope there aren't any fan petitions for their return this time around.

I used to be a great fan of the Express until their egos got in their way. They seemed to think all the other high-flying, rock and roll-influenced teams—especially The Midnight Rockers, Bad Company, and The Southern Rockers—were "copycats" of The Rock 'n' Roll Express ("Press Conference," November 1988).

In the interview, they *did* make some valid statements. Gibson was right in admitting that there was no comparison between the Express and other teams; he must have subconsciously realized that his team couldn't compete with the others.

One last word to Rick Morton and Robert Gibson: We don't need you anymore, so don't try getting back together. There are bigger and better things for us to cheer in this world than The Rock 'n' Roll Express.

HOLLY BLOSSER
Vancouver, WA

WOMEN'S WORLD

I was very heartened to read your article on Madusa Miceli in your November 1988 issue ("Why Madusa Miceli Hates Missy Hyatt"). Like Madusa, I believe that the status of women in the mat sport is greatly diminished by the cruel domination of men's coverage.

For example, the NWA has no women wrestlers, the WWF only rarely showcases their fine female stars, and World Class prefers to spotlight the women only when they can prepare a pit of mud for two scantily clad bimbos. Only the AWA has a genuine World women's title, and it is proudly held by Miceli.

Madusa is right when she says that we women can think for ourselves and achieve great things *outside* the shadow cast by mighty men. In the wrestling world, they're not even so mighty.

So thanks again for giving the women the spotlight for once. I hope that all the federations' officials read your article and will soon begin to respect the talents of the great women wrestlers of the world.

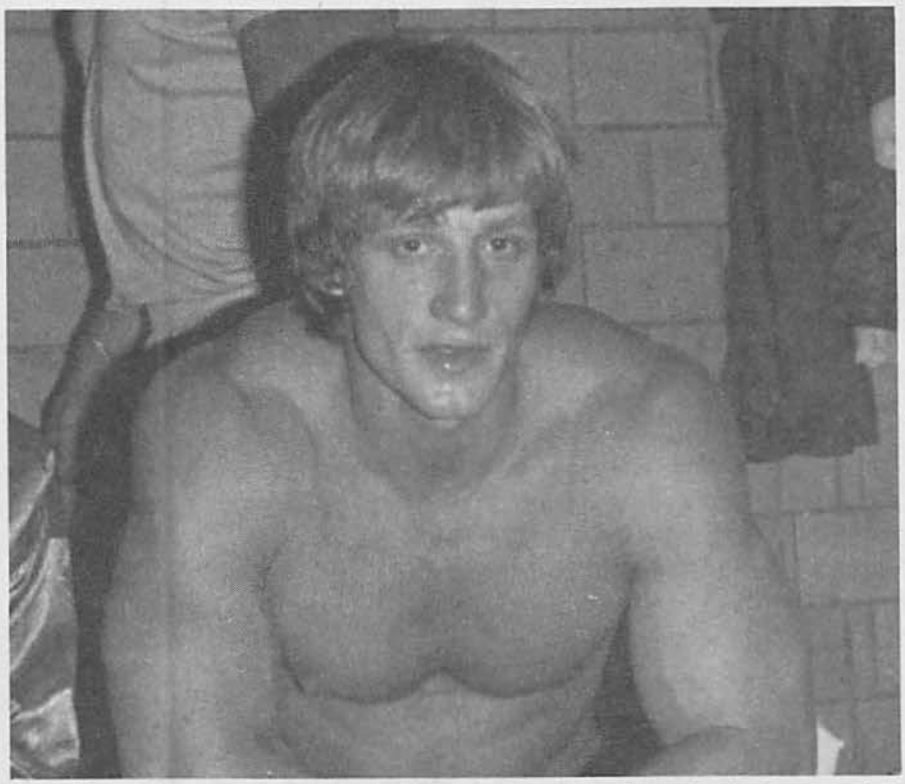
JENNIFER WICK
Philadelphia

(Continued on page 56)

A lot of people, like Holly Blosser, are actually glad that The Rock 'n' Roll Express has disbanded. She thinks their egos got too big and that no one needs them anymore.

RINGSIDE

With Bill Apter



Kevin Von Erich was admitted to Baylor University Hospital on September 4 after a match in Cleveland the previous evening. The former World Class champion was believed to be feeling the effects of a series of minor concussions over the past few months.

FORMER WORLD CLASS champion **Kevin Von Erich** was admitted to Baylor University Hospital on Sunday, September 4, after checking in to Cleveland's Southwest Suburban Hospital the previous evening. At press time, Kevin was still undergoing tests. A CATScan was negative.

On Saturday night in Cleveland, Kevin and **Michael Hayes** defeated **Adrian Street** and **The Masked Spoiler** in a best two-of-three falls main event on a Great Lakes Wrestling card at the Medina County Fairgrounds. Kevin excused himself from doing a TV interview later, saying he wasn't feeling well, and told **Pro Wrestling Illustrated** photographer **Anastasia Pantsios** that he had suffered a few minor concussions over the past few months and was feeling nauseous. According to Pantsios, Kevin planned to see his doctor on Monday. Later in the evening, Kevin checked into Southwest Suburban and was kept overnight. He flew to Baylor the following morning and was admitted late Sunday.

Word from the WWF is that **The Honky Tonk Man** and his manager, **Jimmy Hart**, were told by WWF officials not to bother to file a protest of Honky Tonk's 31-second loss to **The Ultimate Warrior** for the Intercontinental title at SummerSlam 88 in Madison Square Garden. Honky Tonk was scheduled to defend his title against **Brutus Beefcake**, but when Beefcake had to bow out do to injuries, the cocky Honky Tonk Man made himself available to any challenger. After the loss, Honky Tonk and Hart began to grumble that the match should not have been sanctioned and the title should be returned. If the promoter had forced Honky Tonk to wrestle Ultimate Warrior, he'd probably have a case. But it was Honky Tonk who brought the adversity upon himself, and if he files a protest now, it will make him look even worse than he did in losing his title in record time.

Beef Wellington—formerly known as **Biff** Wellington—is the top contender to **Johnny Smith's** Stampede British Commonwealth title. A series of outstanding matches—none of which have reached a decisive finish—featuring 30 minutes of non-stop action have already been fought . . . **Steve DiSalvo** pinned Stampede North American champ **Makhan Singh** in a non-title match in Calgary. Singh is scheduled to tour South Africa to defend his belt and team with **Tiger Jeet Singh** . . . **Jimmy Valiant** has joined **Jerry Lawler's** CWA war against **Tommy Rich** and **Buddy Landell**.

Eddie Gilbert and **Paul E. Dangerously's** suspension has been lifted by Continental official **Ron West**. In early August, West suspended Gilbert and Dangerously for beating up **Willie B. Hert Jr.** and photographer **Sam Lowe**, and throwing fire at referee **John Keaton** and wrestler **Austin Idol**. But **Willie B. Hert** asked West to lift the suspension so he could get revenge. West agreed and decided to let the fans decide by write-in vote and by circulating petitions on whether Gilbert and Dangerously should be suspended permanently.

(Continued on page 48)

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January 1984/COLOR PINUP: Harley Race. **Rick Martel,** Snuka, Freebirds, Dillon, Sawyer.

February 1984/COLOR PINUP: Jim Garvin & Sunshine. **Greg Valentine,** Super Destroyer, Race, Sawyer, Abdullah.

June 1984/COLOR PINUP: Dick Slater. **Ted DiBiase,** Wrestling II, Magnum T.A., Patera, Hogan.

July 1984/COLOR PINUP: Paul Ellering. **Jimmy Valiant,** JYD, Fab Ones, Gagne, Windham.

August 1984/COLOR PINUP: Stan Hansen. **Jerry Lawler,** Sullivan, Slaughter, Blackwell & Patera, Flair.

October 1984/COLOR PINUP: Billy Jack. **Kerry Von Erich,** Martel, Blanchard, Fabulous Blonds, Armstrong.

November 1984/COLOR PINUP: Rick Martel. **Sgt. Slaughter,** Von Erich, Road Warriors, Windham, Rotundo.

January 1985/COLOR PINUP: Tito Santana. **Road Warriors,** Billy Jack, Hayes, 1984 fan ballot.

February 1985/COLOR PINUP: Magnum T.A. **Rick Martel,** Hogan, Backlund, Ellering.

April 1985/COLOR PINUP: Ronnie Garvin, **Jimmy Snuka,** Warriors, Gordy, Flair, Rhodes.

June 1985/COLOR PINUP: Barry Windham. **Dusty Rhodes,** Slaughter, Hogan, Von Erich, T.A.

JULY 1985

July 1985/COLOR PINUP: Sgt. Slaughter. **Hogan vs. Piper,** Warriors, One Man Gang, T.A., Martel.

September 1985/COLOR PINUP: Junkyard Dog. **Magnum T.A,** Von Erich, Hogan, AWA scouting reports.

October 1985/COLOR PINUP: Chris Adams. **Rick Steamboat,** Warriors, Nikita, WWF scouting reports.

November 1985/COLOR PINUP: Randy Savage. **Ric Flair,** Slaughter, Steamboat, World Class scouting reports.

December 1985/COLOR PINUP: Jesse Ventura. **Great American Bash,** Von Erich, Orndorff, Williams & DiBiase.

January 1986/COLOR PINUP: Hacksaw Duggan. **Hulk Hogan,** T.A., Brody.

February 1986/COLOR PINUP: Nikita Koloff. **Mike Von Erich,** Warriors, Santana, Taylor, Barbarian, Race.

April 1986/COLOR PINUP: Ric Flair. **Wendi Richter,** Adams & Hernandez, Dusty & Warriors vs. Flair & Andersons.

May 1986/COLOR PINUP: Rick Steamboat. **Road Warriors,** Humongous, Bulldogs, Hansen vs. Martel.

June 1986/COLOR PINUP: Kevin Von Erich. **Hulk Hogan,** Adams, Duggan, Scott Hall.

July 1986/COLOR PINUP: King Kong Bundy. **R & R Express,** Hall and Hennig, Ventura, Warriors.

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October 1986/COLOR PINUP: John Studd. **Nikita Koloff,** Savage vs. Bundy, Landell, Flair vs. Lugar, Simpson.

November 1986/COLOR PINUP: Baby Doll. **British Bulldogs,** Von Erich, Hansen, Gordy, Flair-Tully-Arn-Ole.

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February 1987/COLOR PINUP: Savage & Elizabeth. **UWF Tournament,** T.A., Baby Doll, Hogan vs. Orndorff.

April 1987/COLOR PINUP: Lex Luger. **Dusty & Nikita,** DiBiase, DeBeers, Dingo, WWF Housecleaning.

May 1987/COLOR PINUP: Steve Williams. **Andre-Hogan,** UWF Tourny, Albano, Cornette, Dynamite Kid, Kerry.

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October 1987/COLOR PINUP: Ted DiBiase. **Ric Flair,** Williams, Rockers, Hogan vs. Steamboat, NWA & WWF.

November 1987/COLOR PINUP: George Steele. **Nikita Koloff,** Warriors, Harts, Hogan, Windham.

January 1988/COLOR PINUP: The Road Warriors. **Ted DiBiase,** Flair-Garvins, Hogan & Ventura, Zbyszko.

February 1988/COLOR PINUP: Ronnie Garvin. **Randy Savage,** Garvin-Flair, Von Erichs, Freebirds.

April 1988/COLOR PINUP: Rick Martel. **Lex Luger,** Flair-Garvin, Kerry, Survivor Series, Iron Sheik.

May 1988/COLOR PINUP: Sting. **Andre,** Valentine-Beefcake, Flair, Cornette, Owen Hart.

June 1988/COLOR PINUP: Tully Blanchard. **Hulk Hogan,** Muraco, Perez, Rockers, Bunkhouse Stampede.

July 1988/COLOR PINUP: Curt Hennig. **Hogan vs. Andre,** Express vs. Rockers, Beefcake, Perez, Rotundo-Sting.

August 1988/COLOR PINUP: Al Perez. **Savage & Hogan,** Gilbert-Lawler, Four Horsemen, Kerry Von Erich.

October 1988/COLOR PINUP: Ultimate Warrior. **Sting,** Savage, Lawler, Williams, Steamboat, Varsity Club.

November 1988/COLOR PINUP: The Midnight Express. **Hogan,** Rhodes, Express, Powers of Pain.

December 1988/COLOR PINUP: Hacksaw Duggan. **Four Horsemen,** Brody, Bigelow, Garvin, Precious.

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from the desk of. . .

Stuart M. Saks

Ric Flair doesn't need to be loved. He doesn't even need to be respected. All that matters to Ric Flair is that he's remembered. Remembered as the greatest NWA champion ever.

"When the *History of Wrestling* is written," Flair is fond of saying, "Ric Flair's picture will be on the cover of the book."

There is a peculiar irony in the psyche of the NWA World champion. He'll cheat to win, he'll run from the ring or push a referee to ensure that he loses. He flouts the rules of wrestling as no champion has done before. He laughs off the heavy criticism he draws from the fans and press for his actions.

He couldn't care less what people think of Ric Flair—The Wrestler. What does concern him is what they will think about Ric Flair—The Legend. No man I've ever met in this business is quite like him. Often, when interviewing the champ, I marvel at how differently he approaches the print and broadcast media. The reason for this paradox goes along with his overriding desire to be respected as the best by future historians. TV interviews are for now. Magazine interviews will live in print forever. When wrestling historians study the words of Ric Flair, they'll perceive him as more thoughtful than boastful.

Flair has earned a reputation as one of the sport's true greats. Even so unlikely a person as Vince McMahon grudgingly admits his respect for the man who has dominated the rival NWA through the '80s. Flair is probably the most complete wrestler of his generation. He remained in the number-one slot in the *PWI* ratings at a time when the expansionist WWF had many people throughout the country believing there was only one federation. Not long ago, we dropped Flair from the number-one spot, and that hurt him deeply. He objected vehemently to our decision, but deep down I think he understood. Flair, assuming his place in history had already been established, was coasting. Rarely would he ever stray from the friendly confines of the NWA heartland in the Mid-Atlantic region of our nation. This broke tradition with every other NWA champion and with the pattern he had established for himself during his early years as World champion.

Like the champions before him, Flair would travel to various NWA cities, putting his belt on the line against each territory's top contender. Before Texas seceded from the NWA, Flair would make an annual defense at the Parade of Champions card at Texas Stadium. Despite the fact that he lost the title, his match with Kerry Von Erich at the inaugural Parade of Champions in 1984 will be remembered as a

(Continued on page 58)

BACK ISSUES OF THE Wrestler

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Don't miss a single issue of the magazine that has thrilled wrestling fans for two generations, THE WRESTLER. Complete your collection of the most respected wrestling publication in the world today. Supplies are limited. Don't delay—order today!

November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Piper, Blair.

December 1982/Stories include: Snuka, Rich, Kamala, Junkyard Dog.

January 1983/Stories include: Putski, Muraco, Windham, Bockwinkel.

February 1983/Stories include: Bockwinkel, Backlund, Rich, Kamala.

April 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Tiger Mask, Sammartino, Bundy.

May 1983/Stories include: Samoans, Von Erich, Rhodes, Orndorff.

June 1983/Stories include: Windham, Martel, Brody, Andre.

July 1983/Stories include: Flair, Adonis, Sullivan, Zbyszko.

August 1983/Stories include: Valentine, Blanchard, Windham, Street.

September 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Briscos.

October 1983/Stories include: Race, Sawyer, Briscos, Bass.

November 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Santana, Von Erichs, Kabuki.

December 1983/Stories include: Mascaras, Superstar, Von Erich, Zbyszko.

January 1984/Stories include: Valentine, Hogan, Von Erich, Road Warriors.

March 1984/Stories include: Santana, Hogan, Von Erich, Sawyers.

April 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Ellering, Von Erich, Rhodes.

May 1984/Stories include: Windham, Brody, Road Warriors, Junkyard Dog.

June 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Billy Jack, Flair, Armstrong.

July 1984/Stories include: Rich, Billy Jack, Valiant, Von Erich.

August 1984/Stories include: Garvin, Sullivan, Freebirds, Street.

September 1984/Stories include: Von Erich, Piper, Steamboat, Billy Jack.

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Wrestler
CAPT. LOU ALBANO'S APOLOGY TO CYNDI LAUPER
KERRY VON ERICH: "I'VE GOT RIC FLAIR, NWA TITLE WITHIN A FEW..."
HOW YOU CAN HELP JERRY LAWLER RUN RICK RUDE FROM WRESTLING!

JANUARY 1985

January 1985/Stories include: Von Erich, Warriors, Albano, Koloffs.

February 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Santana, Billy Jack, Nikita Koloff.

March 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Warriors, Martel, Rude.

April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Von Erich-Adams, Flair, Tonga & Snuka.

May 1985/Stories include: Warriors. Backlund, Santana, Rich.

June 1985/Stories include: Rhodes, Windham, Rich, Hogan.

July 1985/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Reed, Martel, Sunshine.

August 1985/BONUS 4-PG. COLOR SECTION! Plus: Warriors, Magnum T.A., Sheik & Volkoff, McGraw.

September 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Savage, R&R Express.

October 1985/Stories include: Flair, Windham, Shultz, Martel.

November 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Zbyszko, R&R Express, Von Erichs.

December 1985/Stories include: Rude, Fantastics, Muraco, Uncle Elmer.

January 1986/20th Anniversary Issue! 10 Greatest Wrestlers, Rhodes, Hogan, Sammartino.

February 1986/Stories include: Hogan, Orndorff, Flair, Hansen.

March 1986/Stories include: Von Erich, Duggan, Hansen-Martel.

April 1986/Stories include: Von Erich, Rude, Lugar, Hogan, Magnum T.A.

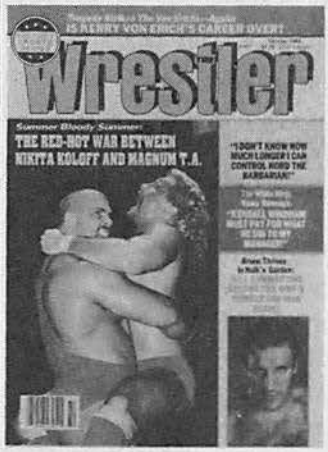
May 1986/Stories include: Zbyszko, Von Erichs, Santana-Ventura, Hillbillies.

June 1986/Stories include: Lugar, Hernandez, Flair-Bockwinkel, Hogan, T.A.

July 1986/Stories include: King Kong Bundy, Koloff vs. Graham, Ric Flair.

August 1986/Stories include: Snuka, Bulldogs, Freebirds, Warriors, Duggan.

September 1986/Stories include: Fantastics, Adonis, Morton-Flair, Brody.


IS KERRY VON ERICH'S CAREER OVER?
Wrestler
Summer Bloody Summer!
THE RED-HOT WAR BETWEEN NIKITA KOLOFF AND MAGNUM T.A.
"I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER I CAN CONTROL HORD THE BARBARIAN"

OCTOBER 1986

October 1986/Stories include: Nikita-Magnum, Nord, Bruno, Kerry, Windham.

November 1986/Stories include: R&R Express, Hogan-Orndorff, Von Erich.

December 1986/Stories include: Flair, Bockwinkel, Hogan, Gilbert, Nikita.

January 1987/Stories include: Heenan, Garvins, DiBiase, Borne & Sawyer.

February 1987/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Gordy, Steamboat-Roberts.

March 1987/Stories include: Windham, Nikita, Adias, Savage-Steamboat.

April 1987/Stories include: Hogan, Luger, Rich-Lawler, R&R Express.

May 1987/Stories include: Flair-Nikita, Andre-Hogan, UWF, Windham, Hennig.

June 1987/Stories include: Flair-Windham, Can-Ams, Rhodes-Murdoch.

July 1987/Stories include: Cornette, Hyatt, Luger, Harts, Adams, Hansen.

August 1987/Stories include: Can-Ams, Luger vs. Nikita, Fantastics, Koko, Nord.

September 1987/Stories include: Koloffs, Harts, Duggan, Hennig, Hart.

October 1987/Stories include: Savage-Honky Tonk, Horsemen, Patera, Kerry.

November 1987/Stories include: Williams, Luger, Hogan-Khan, Rich.

December 1987/Stories include: Hogan, Windham, Lawler, Flair, Beefcake.

January 1988/Stories include: Nikita-Taylor, Warriors, DiBiase-Duggan.

February 1988/Stories include: Flair, Andre-Hogan, New Breed, Kerry.

March 1988/Stories include: Hogan, Luger-Sting, Calgary, Demolition.

April 1988/Special issue! Starrcade '87, Survivor Series, AWA & World Class. Also: Strike Force, Luger, Rockers.

May 1988/Stories include: Horsemen, Hogan, Flair, Fantastics, DiBiase.

June 1988/Stories include: Sting-Flair, DiBiase, Kerry, Nikita, Zenk.

July 1988/Stories include: Fantastics, Hogan, Windham, McMahon, Rich.

August 1988/Stories include: Savage, Windham-Luger split, Demolition, Lawler, Ellering.

September 1988/Stories include: Duggan vs. Andre, Hogan, Windham.

October 1988/Stories include: Rhodes, Fantastics, Hennig, Roberts-Rude.

November 1988/Stories include: Midnight Ex., DiBiase, Bossman, Brody.

THE WRESTLER

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INSIDE

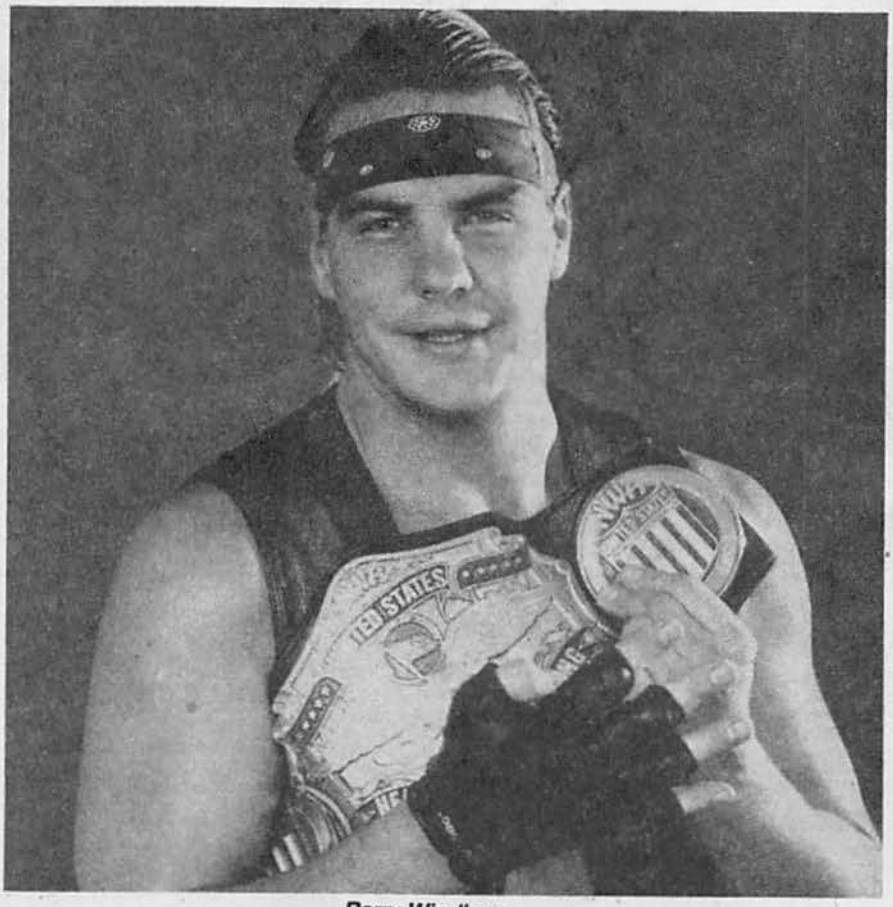
With CRAIG PETERS

PREDICTIONS '89—TIME TO PROGNOSTICATE!

The March 1988 year-end double issue of *PWI* featured a special four-page section containing readers' predictions for what would happen in 1988. Some were funny, some were serious, and some actually came true (Keith Kraska of Depew, New York, for example, correctly foresaw Barry Windham's U.S. title victory; but Pee Wee Herman never showed up as WrestleMania IV timekeeper—much to the dismay of prognosticator Philip Bruno of New York City).

Well, the March 1989 year-end issue is just around the corner, and it's time to polish up those crystal balls. What will happen in wrestling in 1989? Which champions will prevail and retain their belts? Who will lose their titles? What will be the main events of the big cards of the year? What injuries will occur? Who will turn bad—or good? Who will be run out of the sport, and who will return? What will happen in the pages of *PWI* itself?

Not all the predictions need be serious. Indeed, a dash of humor is always welcome, and the more creative the predictions the better. The most intriguing and entertaining selections will be printed in the March 1989 year-end double issue of *PWI*, which goes on sale December 20.



Barry Windham

Send all your predictions to: Predictions 1988 c/o *Pro Wrestling Illustrated,* Box 48, Rockville Centre, New York, 11571.

WHO READS PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED?

That's the question I tried to answer by conducting a poll in the October 1988 edition of *PWI*. In that installment of "In Focus," I asked readers to answer 16 questions about themselves. As of September 1, I received 714 polls. Here's what I found:

Males outnumber females among our readership by 70.2 percent to 29.8 percent. Of those fans who purchase *PWI* on the newsstands, 70.6 percent purchase the magazine every month; only 3.4 percent get the magazine three times a year or less.

The most popular of our sister publications is *Inside Wrestling*, which is read regularly by 76.3 percent of *PWI* readers. A close number two is *The Wrestler* (70.4 percent), followed by *Wrestling Superstars* and *Wrestling 88* (each notching 47.3 percent), *Sports Review Wrestling* (44.5 percent), and *Wrestling USA* (22.7 percent). Nearly one-fourth of *PWI* readers (24.9 to be precise) read more than five wrestling magazines each month.

Some interesting numbers in terms of television: 71.6 percent of *PWI* readers are wired for cable TV, but only 34.2 percent purchased a pay-per-view wrestling program in the last year. The most popular federation watched regularly is the NWA (91.9 percent), which only slightly edged out the WWF (90.6 percent). World Class finished third (56 percent), followed by the AWA (48.7 percent) and the CWA (18.2 percent). How many hours a week of wrestling do fans watch? According to my results, 5.3 percent watch less than three hours weekly, 37.3 percent watch between three and six hours, 27.4 percent watch between seven and 10, and 30 percent watch more than 10 hours!

The most popular home entertainment item? A videorecorder, which is owned by 84.7 percent of our readers (22 percent of our readers own more than 10 wrestling videotapes, and 42.4 percent have purchased one in the past three months!). Next in line is a portable cassette player (79.3 percent), followed by record turntables (75.4 percent), audiocassette players (67.2 percent), and home computers (31.9 percent). A slight majority (50.9 percent) of you plan to purchase four or more record albums or cassettes in the next three months. But the digital audio age isn't being quickly embraced by *PWI* readers: only 12.5 percent own a compact disc player, while just 3.5 percent of you own a portable CD unit.

A PWI fan

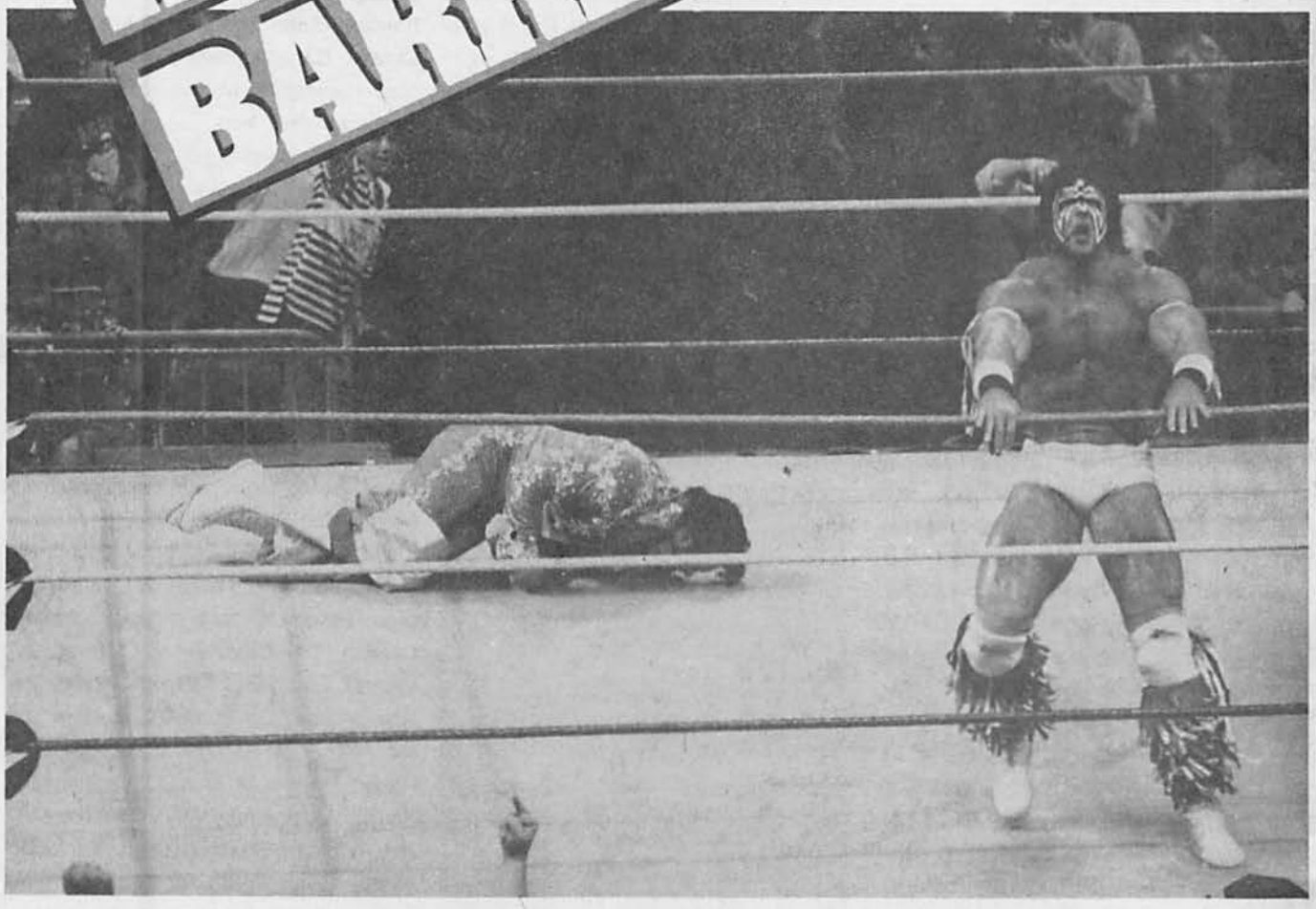
Finally, I'd like to thank everyone who participated in this poll for your effort. The results will go a long way toward telling us who reads *PWI*, and toward helping make this the kind of magazine you want to read every month.

And, as promised, I picked 50 people at random to receive free *PWI* bumper stickers for their participation in this little research project. They are:

Jayne Amari of Greeley, Colorado; Clint Bennett of Mowltrie, Georgia; Judi Bond of Jacksonville, Florida; Ever Carbonell of Atlanta; Cory Casagranda of Crystal Falls, Michigan; Calvin Cotton of Osage City, Kansas; Glenn Courtney of Mississauga, Ontario, Canada; Marie Dalzell of Fonic, New Hampshire; Maxwell Friedlander of Yonkers, New York; Joe Glebaucis of Gardner, Massachusetts; Jay Grymyr of Las Vegas; Tonya Hensley of Lexington, North Carolina; David Horenstein of Forest Hills, New York; Lee Hunsucker of Alamogordo, New Mexico; Douglas Katz of Brooklyn, New York; Kerin Kerwin of Westlake, Ohio; Veronica Killian of Murphy, North Carolina; Roger Kline of Milwaukee; Josie Koury of Pittsburgh; Christian Kugel of Brenham, Texas; Paul David LaMontagne of East Lebanon, Maine; Matt Martin of Glendale, Arizona; Kimberly Murphy of Laurel, Maryland; Michael Norwood of Henderson, North Carolina; Beverly Oancia of Saskatchewan, Canada; Tim O'Brewer of Caraway, Arkansas; Emer O'Doherty of Dublin, Ireland; Melanie Ogden, Ashland, Ohio; Jason Palmer of Springdale, Pennsylvania; Robert Powers of Norfolk, Virginia; Jim Renick, Montgomery City, Missouri; Mrs. Jeri Riddle of Bowling Green, Kentucky; Jennifer Lynn Ritchey of Bedford, Pennsylvania; Sandy Robinson of Philadelphia; Perry Scott of London, Kentucky; Achim Solheid of Dusseldorf, West Germany; Scott Stewart, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada; Jimmie Sturdivant of Snyder, Texas; Darryl Tarrance of Detroit; Rick Teague of Tulsa, Oklahoma; Geri Terry of Garden City, Michigan; Terry Thompson of Opa Locka, Florida; Steve Tobkes of West Hempstead, New York; Javier Torres of Middletown, Rhode Island; Miguel Vargas of Los Angeles; Michael Vinson of Austell, Georgia; Jamie Waters of Lake Placid, Florida; Brad Weatherford of Waukena, California; Robert Wellman of Marquette, Michigan; Betty Wright of St. Louis. □

NO HOLDS BARRED

with David Rosenbaum



The Ultimate Warrior shakes the ropes with joy after squashing The Honky Tonk Man and winning the Intercontinental title in a record 31 seconds at SummerSlam 88. Associate Editor Dave Rosenbaum blasts the "rule" that allowed Warrior to attack Honky Tonk before the bell.

LET'S FACE IT. Wrestling has some pretty stupid rules. But is there anything more idiotic than the non-rule that allows a wrestler to attack his opponent before the bell rings without penalty? And is there a stupider sight in all of sports than the referee frantically calling for the bell to start the match *after* the attack has already begun?

Unfortunately, this happens all the time. But the incident freshest in my mind occurred on August 29 during SummerSlam 88 at Madison Square Garden, when The Ultimate Warrior charged the ring before the bell rang, mugged Intercontinental champion The Honky Tonk Man, and pinned him for the belt after only 31 seconds. Referee Earl (or was it Dave?!) Hebner called for the bell shortly after the attack began, thereby condoning what, by common sense, should be an illegal act.

Imagine if boxers were allowed to attack their opponent before the opening bell. Most fights would be over in a matter of seconds! And even if they weren't, the referee would never gain control of the fight. Imagine Mike Tyson charging down the runway to attack a defenseless Michael Spinks.

Of course, this can't happen in boxing. The two fighters are called to the center of the ring by the referee, where they are given instructions and ordered back to their corners. Then their handlers leave the ring and the bell rings. The idea of a before-the-bell at-

(Continued on page 60)

CAN YOU FACE THE FUTURE OF WRESTLING?

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He's a wrestling star of the future. Spike's finisher is the Super Destroyer, an awesome power slam from the top of the turnbuckle. He promises to use it on fan favorites like Wolf and number one ranked Star Warrior.

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LOOKING AT...

Matt Brock:

THERE'S NOTHING WORSE than someone who says, "I told you so." The last time I heard an "I told you so" was from the mouth of a friendly bartender as I tried to drown out the memories of an unsuccessful fling. It was a painful gloat, like rubbing salt in a gaping wound.

Now it's my chance to gloat; this time, *I* told *them* so. I told everyone that Cyndi Lauper, MTV, and the so-called "rock 'n' wrestling" connection would eventually cheapen wrestling to the point where a talentless, wrestler/rocker could even be a major titleholder.

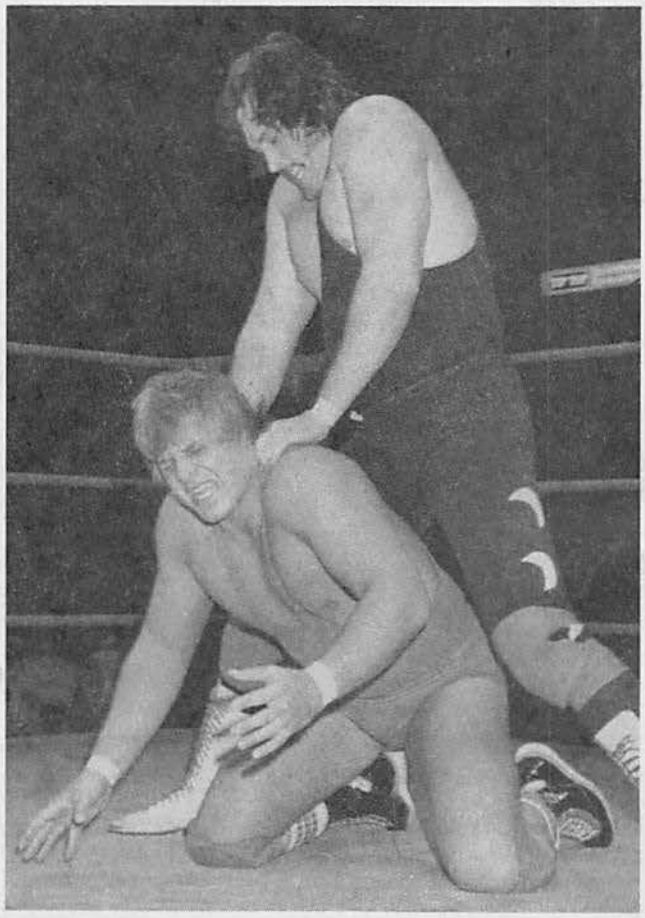
They all laughed and said it would never happen, that the "rock 'n' wrestling connection" was just a way of getting new people interested in the sport. They were blinded, my friends, blinded by the glittery sequins that had attached themselves like vicious parasites to the body of wrestling.

I was one of the few who saw that wrestling would be forever diluted when Vince McMahon Jr. tried to tailor-make the sport for a new audience. I was one of the few who foresaw that "champions" like The Honky Tonk Man would change wrestling from a sport into a rock 'n' roll circus. I didn't wait for the chance to say "I told you so"—I told them right then and there.

I always thought it would be a hell of a lot more satisfying when I finally got to say, "I told you so," to my wrestling buddies. The only problem is that being right had painful repercussions for the entire mat world. This time, the "I told you so" has a hollow, troubling ring to it.

It's no secret that I despise The Honky Tonk Man, everything for which he stands, and especially his claim that sheer longevity made him the greatest Intercontinental champion of all time. He most certainly was not.

I know about Intercontinental champions. I also know that Honky Tonk couldn't lick the boots of the greatest I-C champion ever, Pedro Morales.



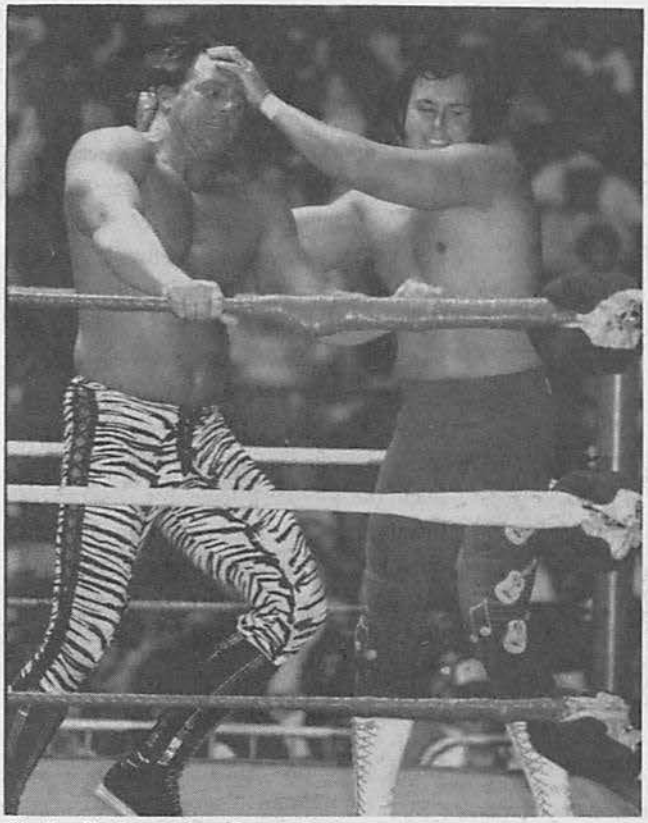
The Honky Tonk Man works on Owen Hart's shoulders and neck during his days in the Stampede area. Honky Tonk was still working on his Elvis impersonation in 1986.

Pedro might have been the best all-around wrestler in the history of the WWF. Not only did he hold the I-C belt longer than any man before Honky Tonk, he also held the WWF World title and a share of the WWF World tag team title. Pedro was a wrestler in the noblest sense of the word, not some sideshow freak in an Elvis

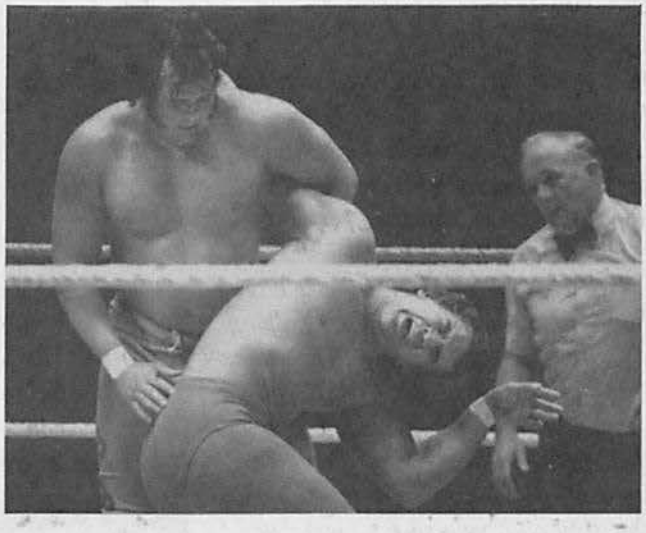
THE HONKY TONK MAN

costume. My colleague Dave Rosenbaum may still be awash in tears of woe at Ultimate Warrior's 31-second title smash, but The Honky Tonk Man is an aberration in a sport that deserves a lot better.

Shortly after WrestleMania II, Wayne Farris perfected the Elvis impersonation he'd done in the Stampede territory and brought it to the WWF. Thus, The Honky Tonk Man was thrust into the WWF spotlight, fitting right into McMahon's pathetic formula. Sure, Cyndi Lauper was gone, but the "wrestling" that replaced her bore the indelible mark that the rock 'n' wrestling idiocy would live on. No longer was the premium in the sport on athletic ability.



Honky Tonk smashes Brutus Beefcake's head into the turnbuckle (above) and catches Rick Steamboat in an abdominal stretch (top right).



With the help of the ropes, Honky Tonk defeated Rick Steamboat in Buffalo in June 1987 to capture the I-C title. And with the help of his manager, Jimmy Hart, Honky Tonk held the I-C belt longer than any of his predecessors. For any other grappler, this achievement would be commendable.

But when you consider the intangibles—outside interference by Hart and Peggy Sue, the ratio of pinfall victories to disqualifications, the pitifully low number of scientific moves known by The Honky Tonk Man—it all adds up to one thing: Honky Tonk was the *worst* Intercontinental champion of all time.

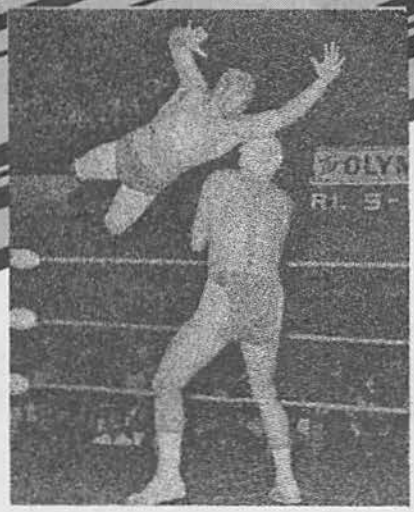
Honky Tonk's only significant move—the "shake, rattle, and roll"—is so telegraphed to the educated eye that it is almost useless against experienced competitors. To preserve his title against seasoned challengers, Honky Tonk resorted to using foreign objects, staffing the ring apron with a megaphone-toting manager, or simply taking a walk.

It's the kind of watered-down wrestling that I foresaw after the first WrestleMania.

And although Honky Tonk is no longer the I-C champion, the "I told you so" still hurts. □

BY EDDIE ELLNER

off the Top Rope



If you wish to contribute to Ellner's mailbag, send your letters to:

TOP ROPE, Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571

[Editor's note: The opinions expressed in this column are those of the letter writers and Eddie Ellner himself. They do not necessarily represent the editorial views of this magazine.]

OKAY, WHAT THE hell is going on here? I want an explanation, and I want it now. The letters that passed my desk this month seemed to agree with me more often than not. Did the years of pen-pounding and bloodletting, of screaming into the wind and banging my head against conventional ignorance, actually pay dividends? One reader, Donald Hall of Baldwin, Kansas, went so far as to write, "the greatest moment in wrestling history is when Eddie Ellner took over the 'Off The Top Rope' column."

Give me a break, Donnie.

I won't deny the pleasure in witnessing the enlightenment of my readership. I feel we began this journey in an empty boat, without maps or a knowledge of the seas. Now we've traveled the world, and together we can weather any storm (or at least know when to pull into port for a rum and Coke).

Of course, as I writhed and twisted (the better to pat myself on the back), this letter arrived from Allen Anderson of Paxton, Illinois: "You are a lousy idiot son of a [expletive deleted], you [expletive deleted] fool! You write as if you're a wizard of wrestling. Prove it to me, boy. You don't know a damned thing . . ." etc., etc.

Ah! The joys of correspondence.

Dear Eddie,

I was very disappointed to learn that The Rock 'n' Roll Express was returning to the NWA because of the petitioning by the readers of *Inside Wrestling*. I didn't realize that many 14-year-old girls read the magazine! Is it possible to start a petition to drive them away again? Could we stick Dusty Rhodes and Steve Williams' names on it?

ERIK SANDER
Severina Park, MD

The Rock 'n' Roll Express is finished! Hooray! Now we can look forward to Rick Morton and Robert Gibson getting pummeled in singles matches.

Dear Erik,

Let me allay your fears. Though 14-year-old girls can influence network television programming and create disturbing fashion trends, there is a limit to their power. That one of our sister publications initiated the ridiculous petition will forever be a source of embarrassment to me. Despite our pathetic pandering to the Express, the dynamic duo *will not* return to the NWA. The reason, as you ought to know by now, is the encouraging news that Rick Morton and Robert Gibson are no longer together as a team. Apparently, the two had a severe falling out over Gibson's continued abuse of hair-styling gel. I understand the argument was so violent that Morton took back the gift certificate for a series of facials he had given Gibson for his birthday, an insult so grave you can bet your Sassons these two won't be drooled over by 17-year-old girls for a while.

Dear Eddie,

Nikita Koloff has made the best decision of his career. Ever since I first

(Continued on page 62)

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PWI's TOP 10

The Ultimate Warrior

TOP10

1. **RANDY SAVAGE**
   245, Sarasota, FL
   WWF World champion
2. **RIC FLAIR**
   243, Minneapolis, MN
   NWA World champion
3. **JERRY LAWLER**
   234, Memphis, TN
   AWA World champion
4. **LEX LUGER**
   268, Chicago, IL
   No. 2 contender: NWA title
5. **TED DiBIASE**
   247, Omaha, NB
   No. 2 contender: WWF title
6. **STING**
   260, Venice Beach, CA
   No. 3 contender: NWA title
7. **BARRY WINDHAM**
   236, Sweetwater, TX
   U.S. heavyweight champion
8. **KERRY VON ERICH**
   260, Denton, TX
   World Class champion
9. **HULK HOGAN**
   302, Venice Beach, CA
   No. 3 contender: WWF title
10. **THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR**
    280, Queens, NY
    WWF Intercontinental champion

TAG TEAMS

1. **TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON**
   Combined weight: 484 pounds
   NWA World tag team champions
2. **DEMOLITION**
   Combined weight: 585 pounds
   WWF World tag team champions
3. **THE ROAD WARRIORS**
   Combined weight: 567 pounds
   No. 2 contenders: NWA tag team title
4. **BOBBY EATON & STAN LANE**
   Combined weight: 453 pounds
   U.S. tag team champions
5. **WARLORD & BARBARIAN**
   Combined weight: 655 pounds
   No. 1 contenders: WWF tag team title
6. **THE FANTASTICS**
   Combined weight: 462 pounds
   No. 1 contenders: U.S. tag team title
7. **PAT TANAKA & PAUL DIAMOND**
   Combined weight: 456 pounds
   AWA World tag team champions
8. **THE HART FOUNDATION**
   Combined weight: 515 pounds
   No. 2 contenders: WWF tag team title
9. **THE BRITISH BULLDOGS**
   Combined weight: 461 pounds
   No. 3 contenders: WWF tag team title
10. **SHANE DOUGLAS & HUMONGOUS**
    Combined weight: 541 pounds
    Continental tag team champions

NWA

World Champion:
RIC FLAIR
243, Minneapolis, MN

1—**BARRY WINDHAM** *236, Sweetwater, TX*
2—**LEX LUGER** *268, Chicago, IL*
3—**STING** *260, Venice Beach, CA*
4—**DUSTY RHODES** *302, Austin, TX*
5—**STEVE WILLIAMS** *265, Norman, OK*
6—**AL PEREZ** *238, Tampa, FL*
7—**NIKITA KOLOFF** *275, Moscow, Russia*
8—**MIKE ROTUNDO** *245, Syracuse, NY*
9—**RICK MORTON** *228, Memphis, TN*
10—**RICK STEINER** *248, Detroit, MI*

WWF

World Champion:
RANDY SAVAGE
245, Sarasota, FL

1—**THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR** *280, Queens, NY*
2—**TED DiBIASE** *247, Omaha, NB*
3—**HULK HOGAN** *302, Venice Beach, CA*
4—**ANDRE THE GIANT** *497, Grenoble, France*
5—**THE HONKY TONK MAN** *255, Memphis, TN*
6—**HACKSAW DUGGAN** *280, Glens Falls, NY*
7—**BRUTUS BEEFCAKE** *273, San Francisco, CA*
8—**JAKE ROBERTS** *246, Stone Mountain, GA*
9—**RICK RUDE** *246, Robbinsdale, MN*
10—**BAD NEWS BROWN** *280, New York, NY*

AWA

World Champion:
JERRY LAWLER
234, Memphis, TN

1—**GREG GAGNE** *220, Robbinsdale, MN*
2—**KERRY VON ERICH** *260, Denton, TX*
3—**SOLDAT USTINOV** *265, Moscow, Russia*
4—**WAHOO McDANIEL** *280, Midland, TX*
5—**MANNY FERNANDEZ** *245, El Paso, TX*
6—**COL. DeBEERS** *248, Cape Town, South Africa*
7—**AUSTIN IDOL** *240, Las Vegas, NV*
8—**EDDIE GILBERT** *222, Lexington, TN*
9—**MANDO GUERRERO** *225, Mexico City, Mexico*
10—**TEIJHO KHAN** *265, Singapore*

WORLD CLASS

World Class Champion:
KERRY VON ERICH
260, Denton, TX

1—**ICEMAN PARSONS** *245, St. Louis, MO*
2—**JERRY LAWLER** *234, Memphis, TN*
3—**KEVIN VON ERICH** *235, Denton, TX*
4—**KAMALA** *360, Uganda*
5—**ERIC EMBRY** *225, Lexington, KY*
6—**STEVEN CASEY** *230, San Antonio, TX*
7—**BUDDY ROBERTS** *247, Del City, OK*
8—**MICHAEL HAYES** *255, Marietta, GA*
9—**TERRY GORDY** *289, Chattanooga, TN*
10—**THE BEAST** *335, Uganda*

OFFICIAL RATINGS

Top 10 and Tag Team ratings are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and inherent skill of each wrestler or team. These ratings are compiled by the magazine's editorial board. Most Popular and Most Hated ratings are based on nationwide telephone and arena surveys of wrestling fans and on the volume and character of mail that comes to our offices. All other ratings are based on the official current positions of challengers to the top title in each category; certain titleholders receive an automatic spot in the ratings.

MOST POPULAR

1. **HULK HOGAN**
   302, Venice Beach, CA
   Last month: No. 1 Most Popular
2. **RANDY SAVAGE**
   245, Sarasota, FL
   Last month: No. 2 Most Popular
3. **STING**
   260, Venice Beach, CA
   Last month: No. 3 Most Popular
4. **LEX LUGER**
   268, Chicago, IL
   Last month: No. 4 Most Popular
5. **HACKSAW DUGGAN**
   280, Glens Falls, NY
   Last month: No. 7 Most Popular
6. **DUSTY RHODES**
   302, Austin, TX
   Last month: No. 5 Most Popular
7. **THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR**
   280, Queens, NY
   Last month: No. 10 Most Popular
8. **JERRY LAWLER**
   234, Memphis, TN
   Last month: No. 8 Most Popular
9. **JAKE ROBERTS**
   246, Stone Mountain, GA
   Last month: No. 6 Most Popular
10. **KERRY VON ERICH**
    260, Denton, TX
    Last month: No. 9 Most Popular

MOST HATED

1. **ANDRE THE GIANT**
   497, Grenoble, France
   Last month: No. 1 Most Hated
2. **RIC FLAIR**
   243, Minneapolis, MN
   Last month: No. 2 Most Hated
3. **BARRY WINDHAM**
   236, Sweetwater, TX
   Last month: No. 4 Most Hated
4. **TED DiBIASE**
   247, Omaha, NB
   Last month: No. 3 Most Hated
5. **RICK RUDE**
   246, Robbinsdale, MN
   Last month: No. 5 Most Hated
6. **EDDIE GILBERT**
   222, Lexington, TN
   Last month: No. 7 Most Hated
7. **THE HONKY TONK MAN**
   255, Memphis, TN
   Last month: No. 6 Most Hated
8. **KEVIN SULLIVAN**
   252, Boston, MA
   Last month: unrated
9. **RON BASS**
   285, Pampa, TX
   Last month: unrated
10. **BUDDY ROBERTS**
    247, Del City, OK
    Last month: unrated

For period ended September 8, 1988

CUMULATIVE RATINGS

These ratings are based on the past 10 issues of this magazine. We have examined our ratings for each of those issues—in our Top 10 and Tag Team categories only—and assigned each position a point value: 10 points for a number-one rating, nine for a number-two ranking, and so on down to one point for a number-10 rating. The point values for all wrestlers in the past 10 issues have been compiled, allowing a maximum of 100 points. Each issue we'll present the top five finishers in each category. While our regular ratings reflect the past month, these cumulative ratings give an indication of wider trends in the sport.

SINGLES

1—RIC FLAIR ..... 96 points
2—RANDY SAVAGE ..... 80 points
3—LEX LUGER ..... 51 points
4—HULK HOGAN ..... 47 points
5—STING ..... 41 points

TAG TEAMS

1—THE ROAD WARRIORS ..... 88 points
2—TULLY BLANCHARD & ARN ANDERSON ... 82 points
3—BOBBY EATON & STAN LANE ..... 62 points
4—DEMOLITION ..... 58 points
5—STRIKE FORCE ..... 37 points

STAMPEDE

North American Champion:
MAKHAN SINGH
380, Saginaw, MI

1—**JOHNNY SMITH**
235, Manchester, England
2—**STEVE DiSALVO**
298, Boston, MA
3—**BRUCE HART**
211, Calgary, Alberta
4—**CHRIS BENOIT**
218, Edmonton, Alberta
5—**STEVE BLACKMAN**
250, Pittsburgh, PA
6—**VULKAN SINGH**
300, Billings, MT
7—**LANCE IDOL**
225, Hollywood, CA
8—**GAMA SINGH**
220, Karachi, Pakistan
9—**JERRY MORROW**
235, Martinique
10—**GOLDIE ROGERS**
223, Hollywood, CA

CWA

CWA Champion:
PHIL HICKERSON
257, Jackson, TN

1—**BRICKHOUSE BROWN**
225, Winter Haven, FL
2—**SCOTT STEINER**
235, Detroit, MI
3—**ROBERT FULLER**
238, Dyresburg, TN
4—**JEFF JARRETT**
200, Hendersonville, TN
5—**JIMMY VALIANT**
251, New York, NY
6—**TOMMY RICH**
248, Hendersonville, TN
7—**GARY YOUNG**
240, Houston, TX
8—**JIMMY GOLDEN**
235, Montgomery, AL
9—**BUDDY LANDELL**
236, Los Angeles, CA
10—**BILLY TRAVIS**
218, Houston, TX

CONTINENTAL

Continental Champion:
TITLE VACANT
To be filled in elimination tourney

1—**EDDIE GILBERT**
222, Lexington, TN
2—**AUSTIN IDOL**
240, Las Vegas, NV
3—**WILLIE B. HERT**
238, El Paso, TX
4—**LORD HUMONGOUS**
325, parts unknown
5—**KEN WAYNE**
208, Memphis, TN
6—**DAN DAVIS**
238, Nashville, TN
7—**JERRY STUBBS**
242, Pensacola, FL
8—**SHANE DOUGLAS**
223, Pittsburgh, PA
9—**TONY ANTHONY**
235, Bucksnorth, TN
10—**TOM PRICHARD**
220, Houston, TX

WWC

WWC Champion:
TITLE VACANT
To be filled in upcoming tourney

1—**HERCULES AYALA**
273, Bayamon, Puerto Rico
2—**CARLOS COLON**
246, Santa Isabel, PR
3—**RICKY SANTANA**
235, Orlando, FL
4—**MIGUEL PEREZ JR.**
232, Carolena, PR
5—**BUDDY LANDELL**
236, Los Angeles, CA
6—**ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER**
360, Khartoum, Sudan
7—**TNT**
242, parts unknown
8—**KAMALA**
360, Uganda
9—**DUTCH MANTEL**
224, Oil Trough, TX
10—**DAN SPIVEY**
300, Tampa, FL

RATINGS ANALYSIS

Every month, this column will tell fans how we go about rating more than 150 wrestlers in 14 different categories. It is a behind-the-scenes look at the most important—and respected—ratings system in the sport. This column is vital reading for all wrestling fans.

A quick note! For all those fans who are racking their brains and checking their old programs, don't rush to send us mail questioning our sanity! This month, we've ranked both World Class heavyweight champion **Kerry Von Erich** and AWA World champion **Jerry Lawler** in both the World Class and AWA ratings. The special consideration is being given to these men while they continue their series of title vs. title matches. Kerry is rated second below AWA TV champion **Greg Gagne**, and Lawler is rated second below World Class Texas champ **Iceman Parsons**.

Some people want to fill the world with silly ratings. Back in the November 1988 issue of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated,* we asked you to send in your ratings in any number of offbeat categories. Well, as in 1986 when we ran this feature for the first time, your response was overwhelming. "Ratings Analysis" mail has picked up considerably, and most of those letters include a silly ratings category.

Dick Murdoch

Here are some samples of your categories and ratings:

A top 10 list furnished by Chad Cames of Mason, Ohio, certainly sets the tone for the inherent silliness of this column. His list is a **Top 10 Most Likely Main Events at WrestleMania V:** 1—Roger Ebert vs. Gene Siskel; 2—Tammy Bakker vs. Jessica Hahn; 3—The Brady Bunch vs. The Partridge Family; 4—Mickey Mouse & Donald Duck vs. Mighty Mouse & Daffy Duck; 5—Lassie vs. Rin Tin Tin in a dog collar chain match; 6—Sean Penn vs. reporters; 7—Garfield vs. Heathcliff; 8—The Three Stooges vs. The Four Horsemen; 9—The Honky Tonk Man vs. Elvis (if either is alive); 10—George Bush vs. Mike Dukakis.

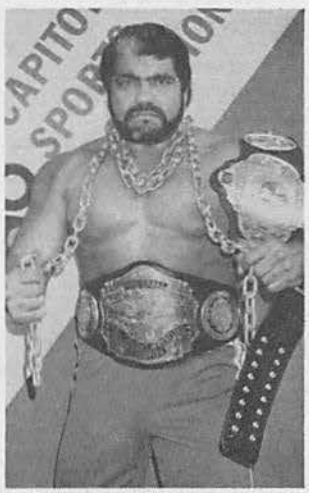
Jay Dougherty and friends of Dubuque, Iowa, sent in their list of the **Top 10 Wrestlers Who Spit During Interviews:** 1—Dick Murdoch; 2—Don Muraco; 3—Road Warrior Hawk; 4—Bobby Heenan; 5—Brother Love; 6—Dusty Rhodes; 7—Jim Duggan; 8—Arn Anderson; 9—Ron Bass; 10—George "The Animal" Steele.

Keith Mullins of Moore, Oklahoma, is quite a weight-watcher, judging from his top 10 list of the **Most Overweight Wrestlers:** 1—Haystacks Calhoun (660 pounds); 2—Andre the Giant (497); 3—One Man Gang (468); 4—Makhan Singh (380); 5—Bam Bam Bigelow (368); 6—Big John Studd (364); 7—Kamala (360); 8—Abdullah the Butcher (360); 9—Max Pain (350); 10—Bubba Rogers (348).

A true NWA fan, Gary Kosnoff, wrote in with **The 10 Stupidest Things In The WWF:** 1—Brother Love; 2—The Megapowers; 3—The Megapowers' Handshake; 4—George "The Animal" Steele; 5—The Honky Tonk Man; 6—The Big Bossman; 7—Koko B. Ware; 8—The Million Dollar Man; 9—Brutus "The Barber" Beefcake; 10—Bad News Brown.

Lori LeMaster of Bellevue, Ohio, certainly has an interest in painting. Her medium is not the canvas, but the faces of her favorite grapplers. Here's her list of **The Top 10 Painted Faces in Wrestling:** 1—Road Warrior Animal; 2—Sting; 3—Road Warrior Hawk; 4—Ultimate Warrior; 5—Kamala; 6—Warlord; 7—Barbarian; 8—Demolition Smash; 9—Kendo Nagasaki; 10—Demolition Ax. She also added an interesting list of **Wrestling's Top 10 Snobs:** 1—Curt Hennig; 2—Ric Flair; 3—Missy Hyatt; 4—Tully Blanchard; 5—Diamond Doll; 6—Rick Rude; 7—Ted DiBiase; 8—Adrian Street; 9—Debbie Combs; 10—Dino Bravo.

Melissa Gunderman's sensibilities are also artistic. The Minneapolis native sent us a list of **The 10 Most Beautiful Championship Belts:** 1—NWA World heavyweight belt; 2—WWF World tag team belt; 3—WWF World women's championship belt; 4—AWA World heavyweight belt; 5—World Class heavyweight title belt; 6—WWF Intercontinental title belt; 7—NWA U.S. belt; 8—NWA World tag team belt; 9—NWA TV title belt; 10—World Class Texas title. In explanation, Melissa wrote, "I consider the NWA belt the most attractive (and probably the most expensive) belt because of the gold and jewels on it. Jim Crockett put a lot of money into that belt. Vince McMahon's World belt is not nearly as nice."



Hercules Ayala

Our last silly list of this issue was furnished by Michael Yates of Rochester, New York, who sent us a list of **The 10 Worst Finishing Maneuvers:** 1—The Rude Awakening (Rick Rude); 2—The piledriver (Don Muraco); 3—The claw (Barry Windham); 4—The Russian sickle (Nikita Koloff); 5—Demolition Drop (Demolition); 6—*Le Bombe de Rougeaux* (The Rougeaus); 7—Flying forearm smash (Tito Santana); 8—The bulldog (Sam Houston); 9—Slingshot suplex (Tully Blanchard); 10—Camel clutch (Iron Sheik).

Back to Puerto Rico. For the third time since its inception, "Ratings Analysis" this month takes a look at the World Wrestling Council, based in Puerto Rico. The WWC heavyweight title, previously held by **Hercules Ayala**, was declared vacant when Ayala attacked **Carlos Colon's** wife at a WWC awards dinner. The recent September 6 WWC anniversary show included such stars as **Wahoo McDaniel, Dan Spivey, Abdullah the Butcher, Dutch Mantel, Jimmy Valiant, The Iron Sheik, Ronnie Garvin,** and **Buddy Landell.**

That's all, folks! But keep those cards and letters coming, and don't forget to keep sending in your silly ratings categories. The address for mail is: "Ratings Analysis," c/o *Pro Wrestling Illustrated;* Box 48; Rockville Centre, NY, 11571. □

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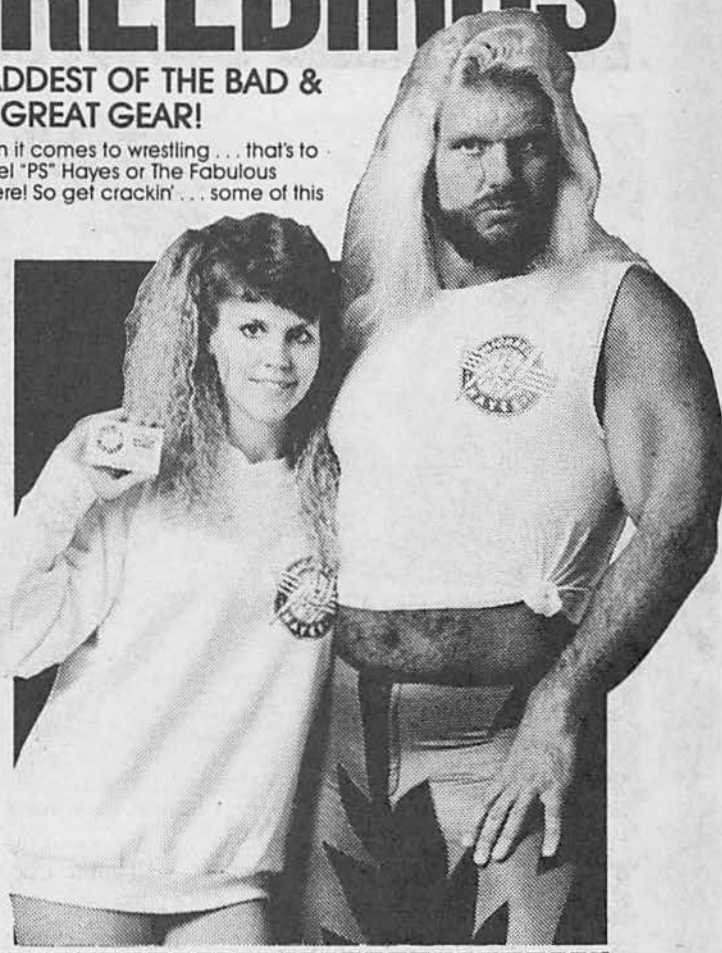

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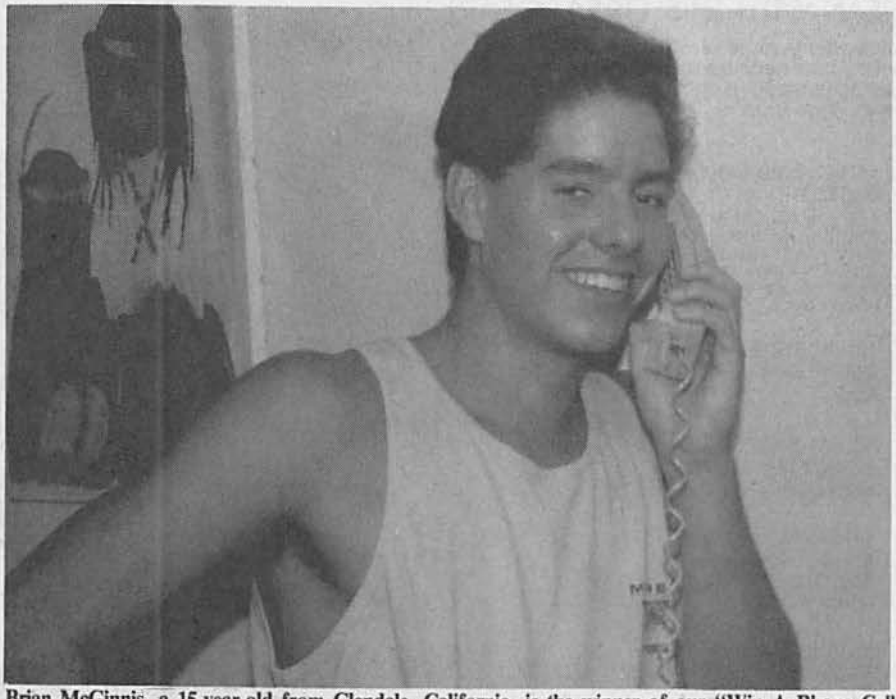


Brian McGinnis, a 15-year-old from Glendale, California, is the winner of our "Win A Phone Call From Sting" contest.

FOR BRIAN McGINNIS, it was going to be an average boring summer Tuesday, another uncluttered day of summer vacation. But then a phone call from *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* shattered the tranquility of his day.

That phone call alerted the 15-year-old high schooler from Glendale, California, that he had won *PWI's* "Win A Phone Call From Sting" contest. When first told that his essay "It's Important That I Talk To Sting Because . . ." was selected by our editors from nearly 17,000 entries, Brian was calm.

"That's cool," he said, in true California fashion. After his 30-minute conversation with Sting, however, Brian's calm abandoned him.

"Wow, that was like a dream come true!" he said. "I was nervous at the start, but Sting was so down to earth and so easy to talk to, that before long I was myself again. It was great!

"You know," Brian continued, "you get this idea from watching wrestlers on TV that they'll be tough to talk to, but Sting was different. He's more real to me now that I've spoken to him. That doesn't mean he's not a wildman in the ring. But I understand how the fans pump him up and how intense he gets in the ring now that I've seen his other side."

The most important aspect of the conversation was Sting's affect on Brian.

"He was great," Brian said. "I'm still his biggest fan and can't wait to see him when the NWA comes to California again."

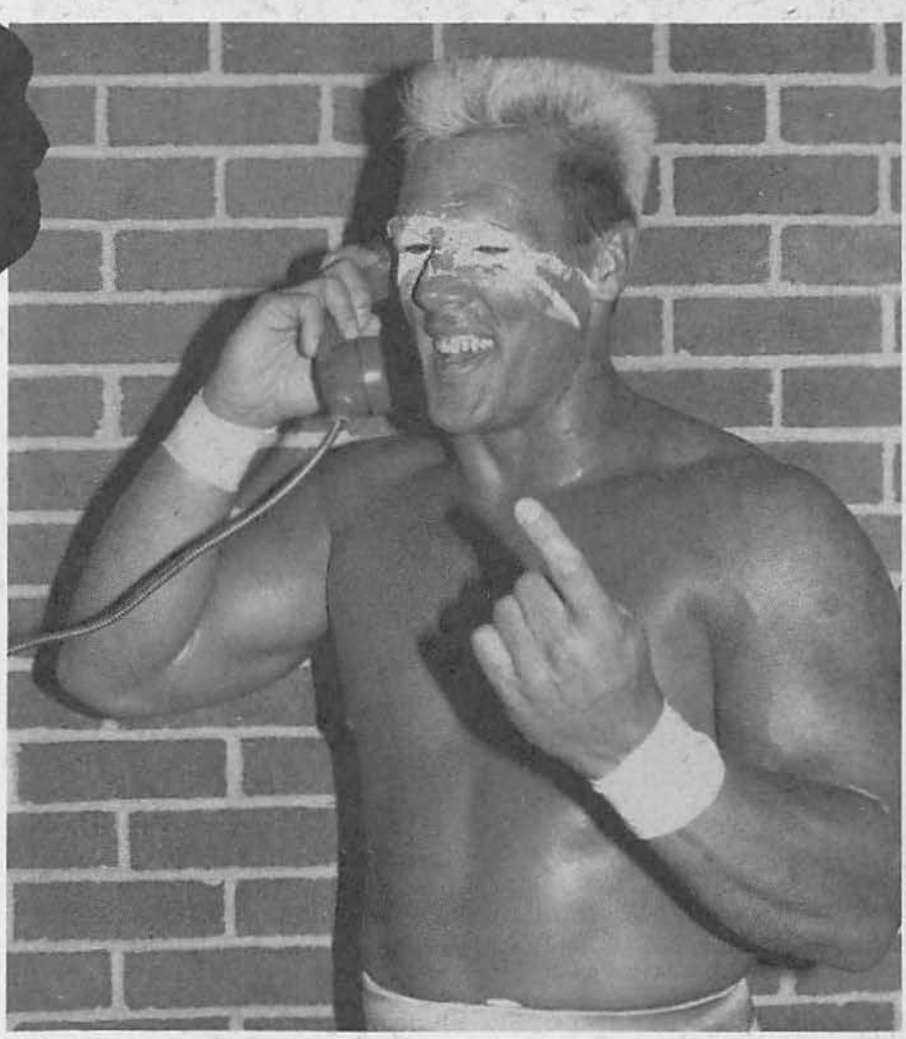
THE CONVERSATION:

PWI: First of all, we'd like to start off by reading Brian's essay and then hearing Sting's reactions: *It's important that I talk to Sting because he should know what he does for the younger fans. I am 15 years old, and right now is the hardest time for me, going through changes. Sting gives me someone to look up to and know that if I am determined, I can get what I want. Sting is a good role model for me.* What's your reaction to that, Sting?

"It was like a dream come true," said contest winner Brian McGinnis of Glendale, California, after speaking with Sting. Brian was nervous at first, but Sting's down-to-earth charm soon had the 15-year-old high school junior at ease

0-PERSON

STING



Sting was happy that Brian sees him as a role model. "I never quit anything," Sting told our contest winner, who was chosen from among thousands of entries.

STING: I'm glad I'm a good role model for you, Brian, but I wonder in what *way* I'm a role model for you? Is it because I go to the gym and I like to keep healthy? What's the deal, Brian?

BRIAN: Well, you know what you want and then you go and get it. It helps me feel like I can, too.

STING: And you can tell I'm not a druggie, right?

BRIAN: Right. You show me that if I'm determined to get something, I can.

STING: That's the way I've always been ever since I was a kid. I never quit anything. I don't want to get cornballish or anything here, but it was probably my dad who taught me that. He told me never to quit anything, so if I started something, I never quit it. And that improves your character.

BRIAN: And you're happy now that you're wrestling?

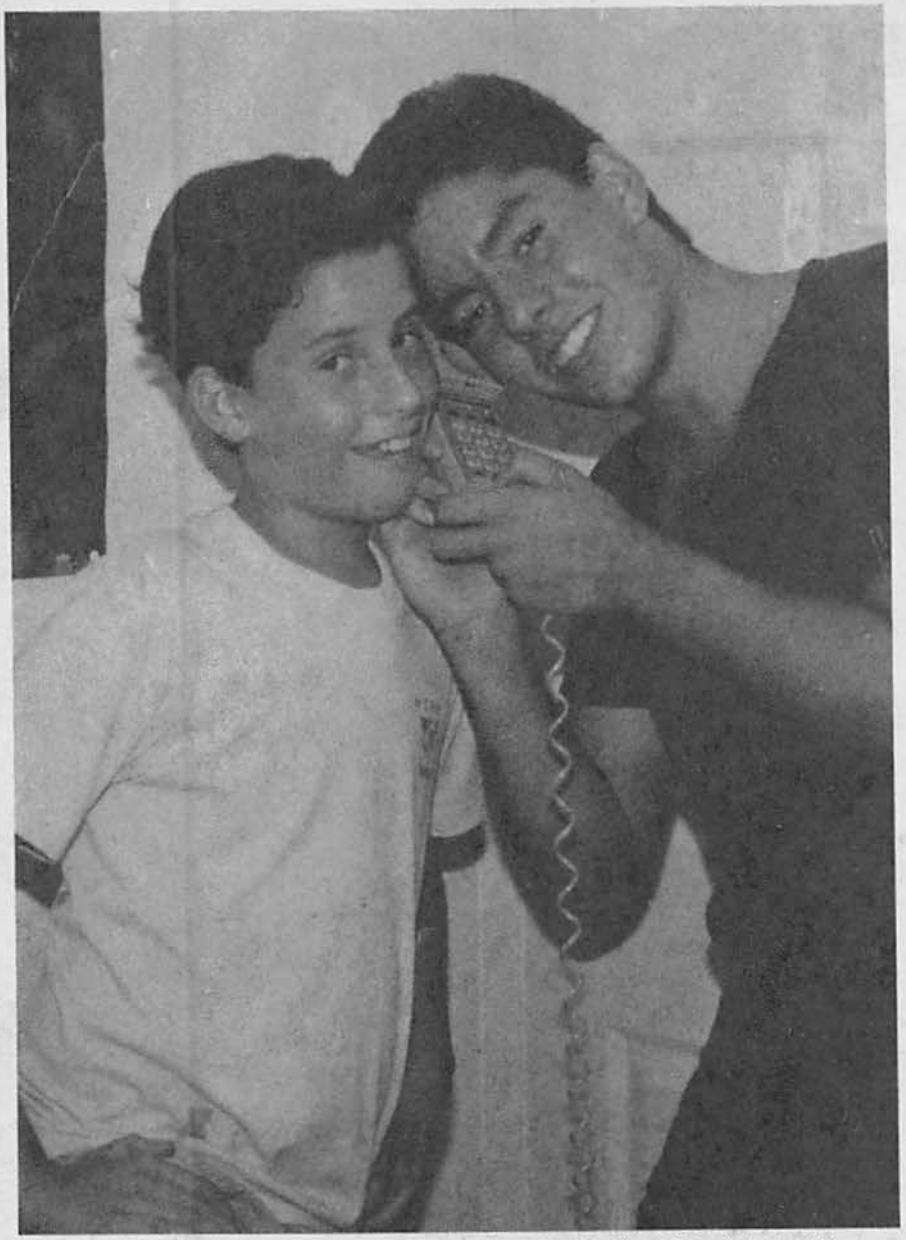
STING: Oh yeah. Yeah, I love wrestling. Traveling around. Everyday we're in a new city or a new state. Sometimes the travel can get you down, but pretty much it's good all the time. Of course, you get to see and meet all kinds of people all over the United States. I like different kinds of people everywhere. I'm not just a jock, or a wrestler, or whatever you want to call it.

BRIAN: What do you do in your spare time?

STING: When I have spare time, I always like to get in the gym and work out. I'm a normal kind of guy. I'll go out at night to clubs. That doesn't mean that I go and sleaze around and get drunk. I just like to go and goof off. Of course, I like to go and look at women. If I'm home in California, the beach is number one for me. I love to work out, and I love to work out on the beach.

BRIAN: What are your goals for 1989?

STING: To get one title or another—if I don't already do it in '88—either the World title or the U.S. title. But a belt doesn't mean everything in the world to me. If I can make people like you understand what's right and wrong, then that means just as much to me as a belt. A belt doesn't mean everything, and money doesn't mean everything, either. As long as I'm making a living, that's fine with



Brian's younger brother, Kevin, listens in on the phone call with Sting. Brian feels that Sting can beat Flair in a no-disqualification match.

me. A lot of guys like to *pretend* they like the fans, but I *really* like the fans. That's obvious, I think. When I go out and wrestle and the fans go crazy, that means more to me than winning a belt.

BRIAN: Would you challenge Lex Luger to a match if he got the belt?

STING: Maybe sometime down the line, if I had nothing else to shoot for. But I hope Lex wins it. I'm not in competition with him at all. I have a lot of respect for him. He has a lot of the same ideas as I do. We're turning wrestling into something new. We're not from the old school. I don't wrestle like anybody else. I like to be physical and intense. I like to fly around the ring. I don't like to just stick to basic wrestling moves. I like to goof off in there a little bit, too. I like to have fun, that's all there is to it.

BRIAN: Most wrestling magazines I've read say Flair is not as good a champion as he used to be because The Four Horsemen interfere. I think if you can get him in a no-disqualification match and have your allies ready, you'll beat Flair.

STING: I know what you mean. It's bogus, as far as I'm concerned. That's why we first came up with the idea to have three judges at ringside and have J.J. Dillon in a cage. So, I know what you're saying. And the magazines are right: He's not as good a champion, because there *is* too much interference by all of the Horsemen all the time. That will change. You wait and see, it'll change.

BRIAN: If you were to win the World title, would you wrestle in any other federations?

STING: Legally, I don't think I could.

BRIAN: Would you want to, though? Who would you like to wrestle in other federations?

STING: I guess right off the top of my head, I'd like to wrestle The Ultimate Warrior. I know he's the new Intercontinental champion. That title match lasted, what, 31 seconds? It's nothing against him, but I know that I've come a lot farther than he has as far as wrestling. I know that he couldn't put me away in 30 seconds or 60 minutes. I wouldn't mind getting into the ring with him. I think a lot of people know that we were partners at one time, and they would like to see that match just to see who's better. He's stronger in some ways, but I think I have a greater technical background than he does. I'm quicker. I can move better. And I know I'm not weak.

BRIAN: How do you feel about tag teaming?

STING: Well, I won the Crockett Cup with Lex Luger, and I like to team every now and then, but I'm pretty much an individualist. There's nobody else who has my style. I'd say I'm a mix between The Road Warriors, Lex Luger, and some other guys. I take a little bit of everything.

PWI: Well, that's just about it, guys.

BRIAN: Okay, well, thank you, Sting. It was great to talk to you.

STING: Thanks, Brian. Hope to see you soon. □

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The "Superstars Of A Super Summer" special issue of *The Wrestler* is cover-dated December 1988 and is on sale now! This one is sure to be a sellout, so get to your newsstand early!

Every issue, reporters from PRO WRESTLING ILLUSTRATED will participate in an incisive press conference with a top wrestling star. The questions will be demanding. And the answers will reveal the innermost thoughts of the giants of the sport.

PRESS CONFERENCE

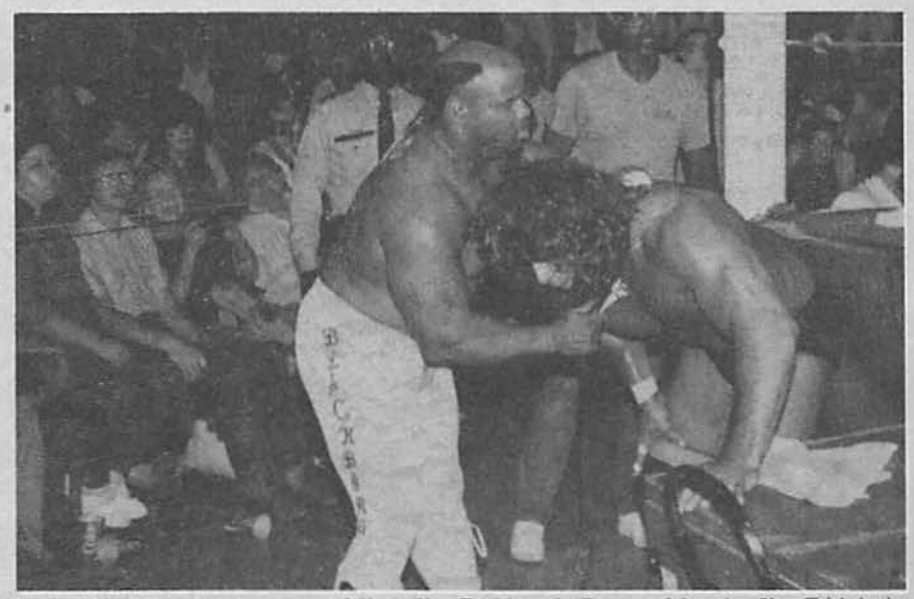
ICEMAN PARSONS

MANY WRESTLERS HAVE proclaimed their hatred for Kevin and Kerry Von Erich during the past few years, but few have been able to back up their words with actions. Surprisingly, Iceman Parsons has emerged as the biggest thorn in the sides of Texas' favorite sons during 1988.

The 235-pound St. Louis native has managed to do what most wrestlers only dream of doing: defeat Kerry Von Erich twice, both times for titles!

Von Erich had won the World Class title from Al Perez on March 6, 1988, but Parsons rook the title from Kerry in the infamous "lights out" match March 25. Although Von Erich reclaimed the belt on May 8 in Dallas, Parsons had used his brief reign to establish himself as one of the most ruthless men in Texas.

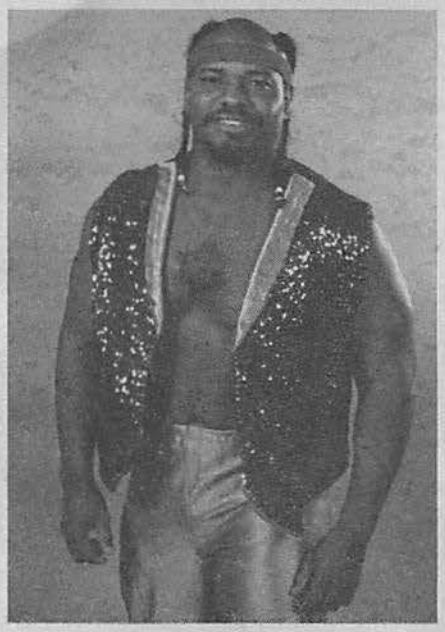
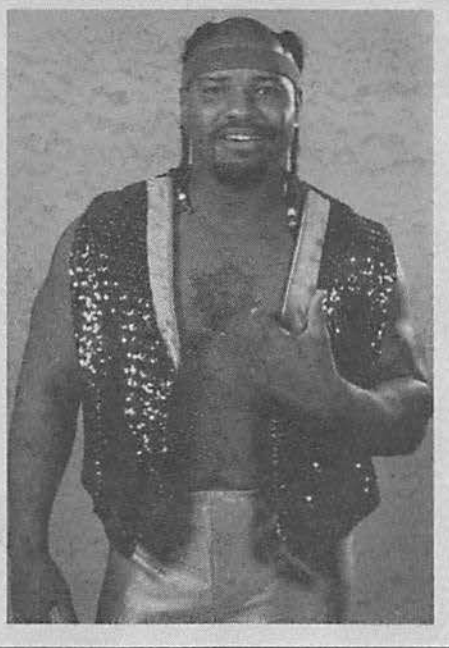
On August 1, Parsons again defeated Kerry—this time the prize was the Texas championship. Kevin Von Erich, the actual champion, had broken his toe in a previous match and was declared unfit to wrestle. World Class officials allowed Kerry to take his place for this title defense.



Iceman Parsons wraps a strap around Kerry Von Erich's neck. Parsons claims that Von Erich is the one who cheats in most of their matches.

Again, it was typical Parsons pandemonium that led to a disputed victory. As Kerry and Parsons were engaging in a slugfest, Parsons ducked a punch, causing Kerry to hit referee Bronco Lubich, knocking out the arbiter. Parsons' manager, Gen. Skandor Akbar, jumped to the ring apron and hit Kerry with a foreign object. Lubich recovered in time to count out the unconscious Kerry.

Assistant Editors Bob Smith, Andy Rodriguez, and Gersh Kuntzman traveled to Dallas to speak with Parsons about this latest in a long line of disputed victories. Once a fan favorite, the Iceman now seems to openly relish his status as the most hated wrestler in World Class.

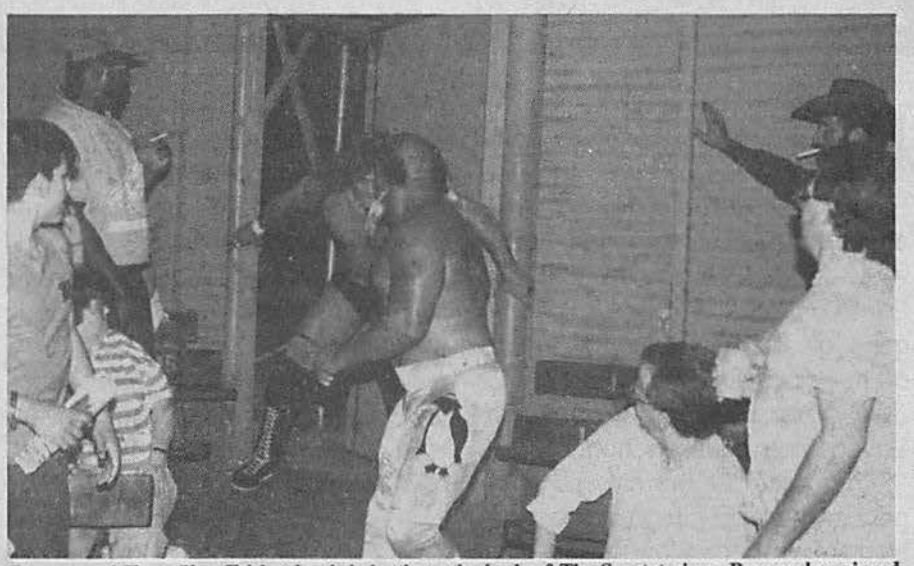
"I have once again proven that I am the only man in wrestling that can defeat the so-called 'great' Kerry Von Erich anytime I want to. Kerry passed out, because I was layin' such a whuppin' on his behind, then I pinned him. He's really easy to beat, you know."

ANDY RODRIGUEZ: Well, Iceman, I'll congratulate you on winning the Texas title, although in my mind you really don't deserve my congratulations *or* the belt.

ICEMAN PARSONS: What do you mean, I don't deserve it? I have once again proven that I am the only man in wrestling that can defeat the so-called "great" Kerry Von Erich anytime I want to. It's just like you reporters not to give me the credit I deserve. I've been the hottest man in World Class all year, but I never see any stories about the Iceman in your magazine. All I ever see is Von Erich this, Von Erich that. So now you want to interview me, but you *still* don't give me my due. You've got some nerve, you lousy bums.

GERSH KUNTZMAN: It *is* true that you've had a great year, as far as winning titles goes, but everyone saw Akbar brazenly interfere when you won the Texas belt. That's really nothing to be proud of.

PARSONS: What are you talkin' about, you raggedy rooty-poot? Akbar *never* interferes in my matches! He's gettin' older now, so he can't be as active as he'd like to be. *(laughs)* Akbar, being the sportsman he is, just jumped up on the apron to yell encouraging words to that ol' ref Bronco, who was layin' on the mat sufferin' from a hay fever attack—I guess Bronco is short for bronchitis, huh? Anyway, Kerry passed out, because I was layin' such a whuppin' on his behind, then I pinned him. He's really easy to beat, you know.



Parsons and Kerry Von Erich take their battle to the back of The Sportatorium. Parsons has pinned Kerry twice in 1988.

BOB SMITH: Sure he is, as long as your friends are around to do the dirty work for you. Just like when you won the World Class title from Kerry back in March. Terry Gordy suddenly appeared at ringside, then the lights went out. By now, everybody knows that you, Gordy, and Black Bart beat up Kerry and Michael Hayes with loaded socks. Then

(Continued on page 54)

The Hogan-Savage-Elizabeth Triangle

Elizabeth and Hulk Hogan celebrate The Megapowers' victory at SummerSlam 88 with a hug (right). They're joined by Randy Savage (far right). Elizabeth is holding Savage's WWF World title belt.

IF THERE WAS a way to measure the force of hugs, the one Elizabeth and Hulk Hogan gave each other after the Megabucks vs. Megapowers match at SummerSlam 88 would have gone off the scale. You've heard of the cold-fish handshake? Moments later, Elizabeth gave Randy Savage the cold-fish hug.

And that's not the only fishy aspect of the ever-intriguing Savage-Hogan-Elizabeth triangle. To wit:

● For weeks preceding SummerSlam 88, Hogan suggested that Elizabeth, wearing an "itsy-bitsy, teenie-weenie, yellow polkadot bikini," would be The Megapowers' secret weapon against The Megabucks, Ted DiBiase and Andre the Giant. Instead, Elizabeth wore a modest one-piece bathing suit. Why the change of clothing? Could it be that Savage vetoed Hogan's idea?

● When The Megapowers appeared on an interview shortly following the announcement of the match, Savage seemed stunned by Hogan's suggestion that Elizabeth was now *"our* manager" and no longer the sole property of Savage. The "Macho Man" simply nodded his head, but never voiced his agreement with this new arrangement.

● Weeks later, Elizabeth kissed Savage during another Megapowers interview. Hogan then asked, "What about me?" and Elizabeth planted a kiss on "The Hulkster's" cheek. All the while, Savage's face got redder and redder.

● And, finally, Hogan has saved Savage several times, including one attack by The Honky Tonk Man on *Saturday Night's Main Event*, and the final round of the World title tournament at WrestleMania IV. Each time, Elizabeth has retrieved Hogan from the dressing room. But is Hogan acting as a friend when he helps Savage, or is he merely trying to impress Elizabeth?

Of course, several different conclusions can be drawn from any of these incidents, and none of them alone imply that a subtle war is now being waged between Savage and Hogan for the love of Elizabeth. In fact, that probably isn't Hogan's objective at all. But when taken together, it appears clear: Only Elizabeth—the Megawoman—can destroy the Megapowers.

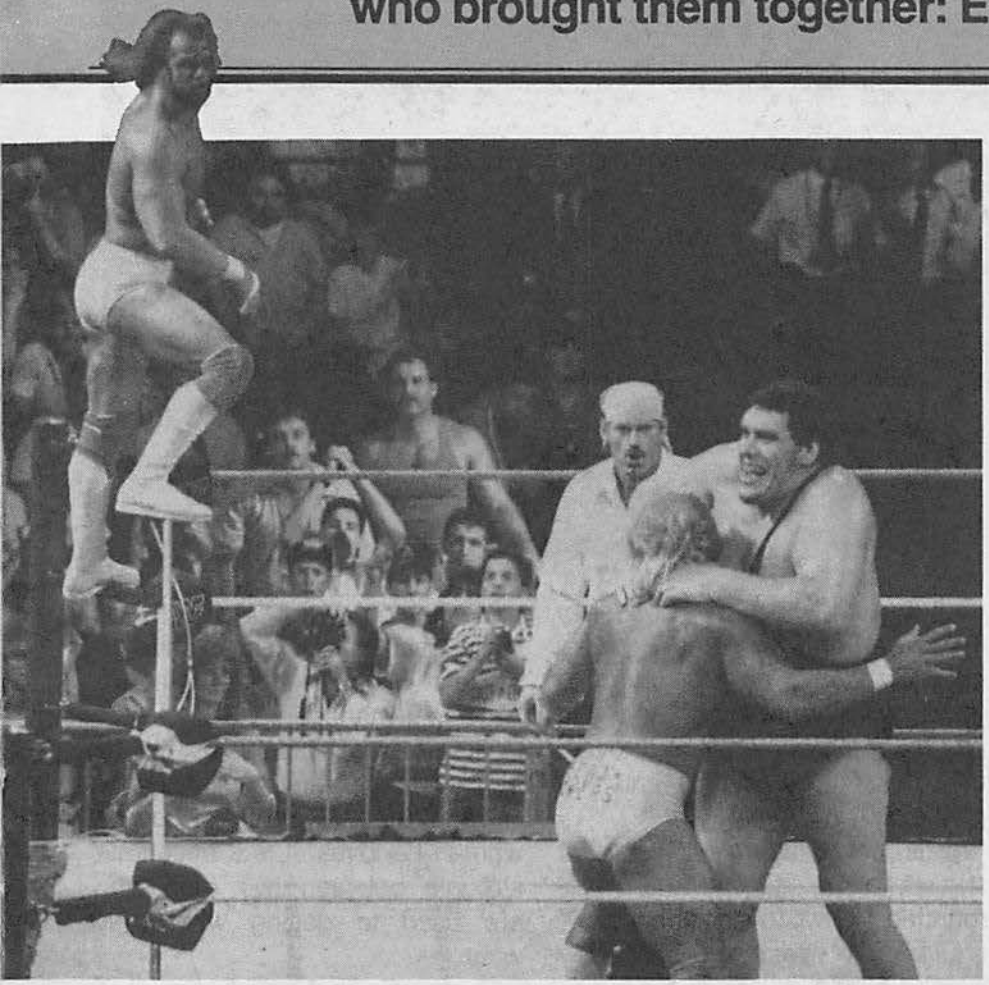
Will she?

"I don't think it's fair to blame a woman for the problems that can crop up between two men who make a living in a sport traditionally shut off to women," said Liz Hunter, a columnist formerly with *PWI* and now writing for *Inside Wrestling*. "From what I can see,

Photos by David Fitzgerald

WILL THE MEGAWOMAN DESTROY THE MEGAPOWERS?

Hulk Hogan and Randy Savage have formed one of the most devastating teams in all of wrestling. But this amazing duo now finds itself threatened by the woman who brought them together: Elizabeth.



Savage mounts the top rope before helping Hogan escape Andre the Giant's powerful choke. Hogan has helped Savage out of many tight situations.

Elizabeth has more brains and class than any other woman in the sport. I'm not an opportunist by nature, but there are times when I would advise Elizabeth to get what she can out of this situation and run."

That might be good advice. Without Elizabeth, Savage wouldn't be nearly as popular as he is. Hogan knows this, and he also knows that he'll never get a shot at the WWF World title as long as Savage is a fan favorite. So, if Hogan is able to convince Elizabeth to manage him and drop Savage, the "Macho Man" would most likely fall out of favor with the fans. Meanwhile, Hogan would be more popular than ever.

The scenario that suggests that Hogan is bidding for the love of Elizabeth is unlikely. Hogan is a married man—and married with children, at that! Back in May, Hogan's wife Linda gave birth to

the couple's first child, a daughter named Brooke. Although the WWF has never revealed this part of Hogan's life, it is well-known to readers of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* and its sister publications, as well as those who follow Hogan through the national news media.

This, of course, leaves a number of possibilities that might lead to the breakup of The Megapowers: Elizabeth could choose between Hogan and Savage; Savage and Hogan could come to blows over Elizabeth; or Elizabeth could simply walk away from the situation, leaving both Savage and Hogan on their own.

Any of these three scenarios would mean disaster for Hogan and Savage. The Megapowers are one of the most impressive tag teams ever formed. Hogan's brute strength and desire coupled with Savage's killer instinct and magnificent wrestling skills makes for an incomparable pairing. Together, Hogan and Savage could dominate the WWF's World titles.

But as Liz Hunter explained, it *would* be unfair to blame Elizabeth for any personal problems The Megapowers might have. Instead, Elizabeth deserves credit for the positive things she has done for both men.

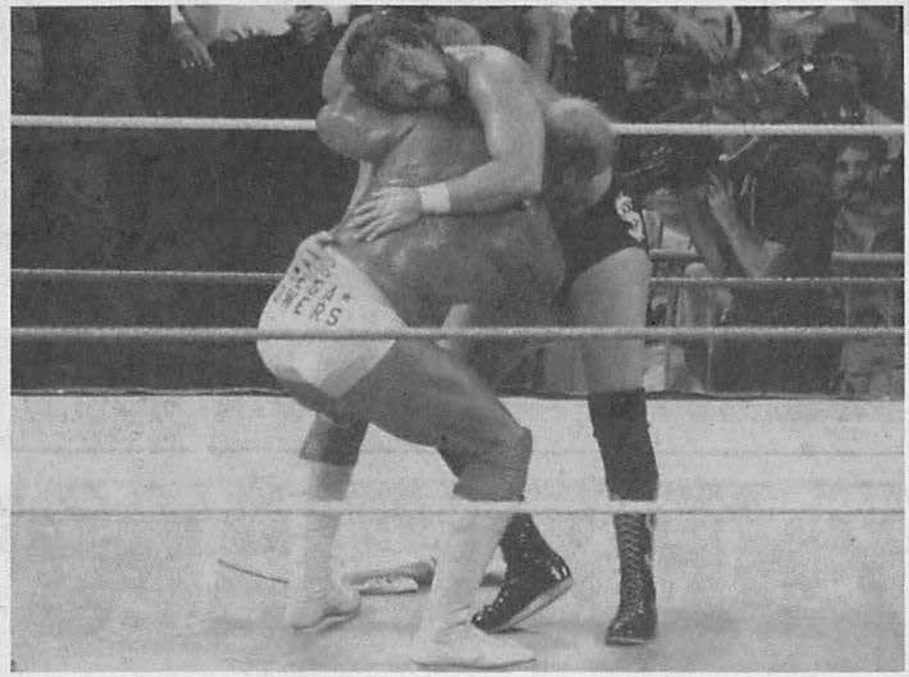
Although underrated as a manager, Elizabeth turned Savage into a World champion. During his Mid-Southern days, Savage was a raw brawler without direction. Elizabeth calmed him down and set him on his proper career course. She also transformed him from a savage rulebreaker into one of the most beloved fan favorites in the sport. And her quick thinking has saved Savage from potentially permanent injury on several occasions.

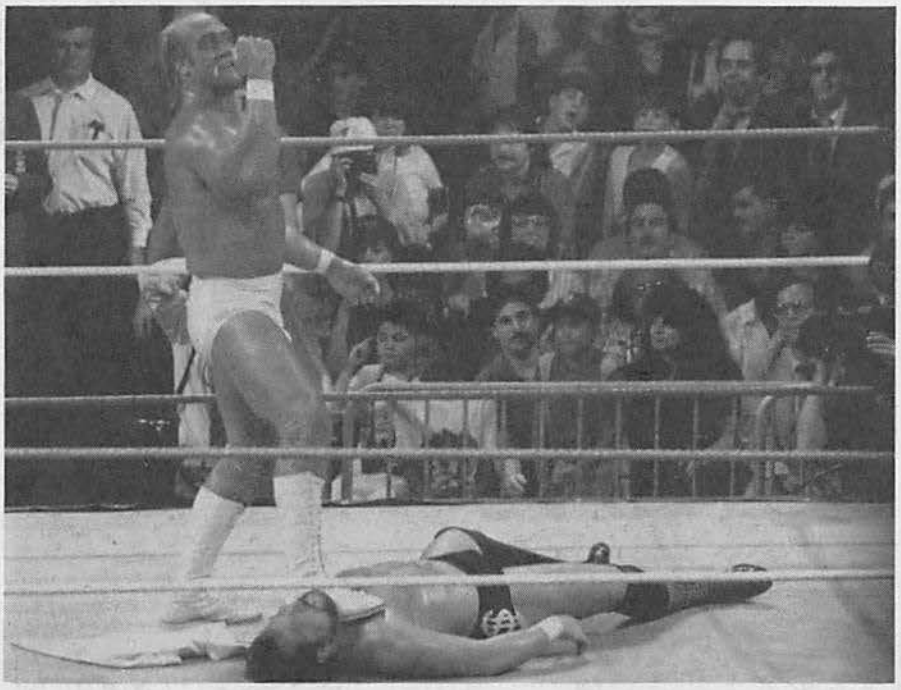
Hogan, on the other hand, would never have agreed to team with his former archrival if not for Elizabeth's intervention. When The Megapowers first shook hands after Hogan saved Savage from a brutal attack by The Honky Tonk Man and The Hart Foundation, Elizabeth was right there to encourage the alliance. And she has been the centerpiece of every major victory by Savage and Hogan ever since.

It is not Elizabeth's fault that she is a beautiful woman surrounded by two of the most powerful men in wrestling. Almost any woman would dream of having to make a choice between Hogan and Savage. And Elizabeth will claim that she doesn't have to make a choice—she is, after all, *Savage's* manager.

But "The Hulkster" is clearly begging for her attention while Savage tries to hold on to the woman he loves. It is a desperate struggle between two men who are used to getting what they want.

A struggle that could soon lead to catastrophe. □





Hogan picks up Ted DiBiase for a slam (above) and places his foot on DiBiase's throat as he looks for crowd approval (below). Although she is Savage's manager, Elizabeth has been getting a lot of attention from "The Hulkster."

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED
T.V. SPORTS

CLOSE-UP

BARRY WINDHAM

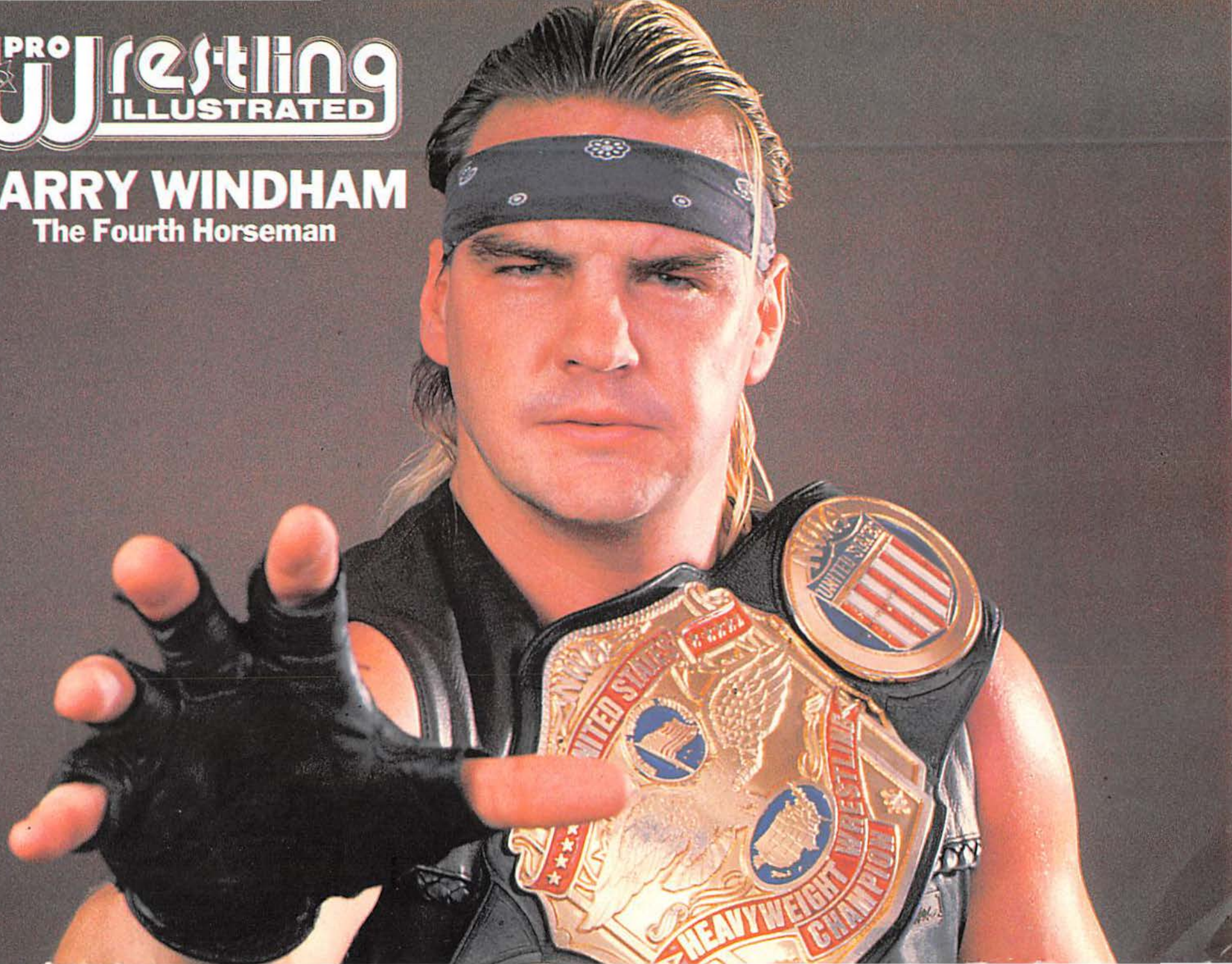
THE NEWEST MEMBER of The Four Horsemen, Barry Windham, has a slew of titles to his credit . . . The son of wrestling great Blackjack Mulligan, Windham once competed as Blackjack Mulligan Jr. . . . Began wrestling in college while attending West Texas State, where he also played football . . . Worked as a referee before making his pro debut in Salt Lake City in 1980 . . . Established his reputation in Florida, where he won the Florida tag team title with Scott McGhee in 1980 (defeating The Assassins in the final round of a tournament on October 18), and with Mike Graham in 1981 (beating R.T. Tyler and Bobby Jaggers on January 2) . . . Teamed with Dick Murdoch for several months until Oliver Humperdink paid Murdoch to turn against him . . . Captured the Florida State title from Dory Funk Jr. on January 12, 1981, but had to forfeit the belt less than three months later because he was in an auto accident and unable to defend the title . . . As Mulligan Jr., teamed with his father in the Mid-Atlantic, Georgia, and Tennessee areas . . . While Mid-Southern champion, received several title shots at NWA World champion Harley Race in 1981 . . . In 1982, broke with his father and changed his name back to Barry Windham . . . Teamed with Ron Bass to win the Global tag team title from Big John Studd and Jim Garvin on November 14, 1982 . . . Beat Greg Valentine in the final of a tournament to become the Southern heavyweight champion . . . Around this time, received his first shots at Ric Flair's NWA World title, and pinned the champion during a televised workout . . . Voted "Most Improved Wrestler of the Year" for 1982 by the readers of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* . . . Reconciled with his father in early '83 . . . Lost the Southern title to Frank Dusek on March 16, 1983 . . . Within a space of three days in September 1983, defeated Jos LeDuc twice for the Florida title . . . Stripped of that title when he left for Japan and didn't defend the belt within the mandatory 30-day time period . . . Started teaming with Mike Rotundo . . . Beat Ron Bass and Black Bart for the U.S. tag team title early in 1984 . . . Bass and Bart regained the belts on April 25, 1984, but Windham and Rotundo won the championship back on May 26 . . . Second title reign was ended by Chavo and Hector Guerrero on July 14 . . . Instead of pursuing the NWA World tag belts, they went to the WWF . . . Both competed in singles matches for several months before reuniting . . . With Capt. Lou Albano as their manager, won the WWF World tag team title from Adrian Adonis and Dick Murdoch on January 21, 1985, in Hartford, Connecticut . . . Lost the belts to Iron Sheik and Nikolai Volkoff at WrestleMania I in Madison Square Garden on March 31, 1985, but regained them on June 17, 1985, in Poughkeepsie, New York . . . Second title reign ended at the hands of Greg Valentine and Brutus.

Beefcake in Philadelphia on August 24, 1985 . . . Returned to Florida to encourage the development of his younger brother Kendall . . . Began feuding with newcomer Lex Luger . . . Defeated old rival Ron Bass for the Florida title on September 1, 1986 . . . Lost the belt to Bass on September 16, 1986, but regained it on October 8, 1986 . . . Became friends with Luger; together they fought Oliver Humperdink's stable . . . Soon after losing the Florida title to Kareem Muhammad, Windham moved to the NWA and teamed with Ronnie Garvin to win the U.S. tag title from Ivan Koloff and Krusher Khrushchev on December 9, 1986, in Spartanburg, South Carolina . . . Attacked by The Four Horsemen while announcing a match between Tully Blanchard and Tim Horner . . . Deeply dismayed when Luger came to the NWA and decided to become a Horseman . . . A series of thrilling title matches with Flair during late '86 and early '87 (including a bout at the 1987 Crockett Cup) brought him close to winning the NWA championship . . . Lost the U.S. tag title to Ivan Koloff and Dick Murdoch on March 15, 1987 . . . A tournament for the belts was called after Murdoch was suspended from the NWA for 30 days . . . In the tourney final in Atlanta on May 16, 1987, Windham and Garvin were defeated by The Midnight Express . . . Defeated Black Bart in the final of the Western States title tournament in Houston on June 20, 1987 . . . Defended the Western States title throughout the 1987 Great American Bashes . . . Also received several title shots at UWF champion Big Bubba Rogers . . . Lost to UWF champion Steve "Dr. Death" Williams in a title match at Starrcade '87 in Chicago . . . Says he lost because he was too sportsmanlike . . . Broke his collarbone during the match and was out for several weeks . . . Lost the Western States belt to Larry Zbyszko on January 24, 1988, at Nassau Coliseum in Long Island, New York . . . Around this time, received his first offer to become a Horseman from Flair, but refused . . . Reunited with Luger when Luger left the Horsemen; they began wrestling together again . . . Won the NWA World tag team title from Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson at the Clash of the Champions in Greensboro, North Carolina, on March 27, 1988 . . . Less than a month later, Windham shockingly attacked Luger as they were defending their title against Blanchard and Anderson . . . They lost the belts, but it didn't matter to Windham; he was the newest member of The Four Horsemen . . . Started using the clawhold he learned from his father, but he augmented it with a black glove . . . Beat Nikita Koloff in the final of the tournament for the U.S. title on May 13, 1988, in Houston . . . Feuded with his old mentor, Dusty Rhodes, throughout the 1988 Great American Bashes . . . Sting is challenging him for the U.S. belt as Windham continues to try to uphold the credo "Four Horsemen, Four Belts." □

PRO Wrestling ILLUSTRATED

BARRY WINDHAM

The Fourth Horseman

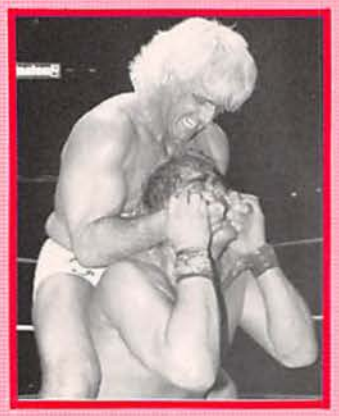


NWA
UNITED STATES

CLOSE-UP

FAVORITE MANEUVER

The claw. Early in his career, Windham learned the power of the clawhold from his father, Blackjack Mulligan. Yet he chose not to use the maneuver, preferring to rely on pure wrestling skill. But since becoming a Horseman, Windham has made the claw a vital part of his offensive.



MOST HATED OPPONENT

Dusty Rhodes. For years, Windham and Rhodes respected each other as wrestlers and trusted each other as friends. But Windham became convinced that Rhodes was ruining his career, so he turned against his old friend with shocking fury. By attempting to destroy Dusty, Windham is trying to deny his past—a past that long included "The American Dream" as a mentor.

GREATEST MATCH

May 13, 1988 vs. Nikita Koloff. At this one-night tournament in Houston, Windham won the U.S. title—the most important singles belt he's ever held. With a great deal of ability (and a little timely interference from J.J. Dillon), Windham defeated Koloff in the final match. With this victory, Windham established himself as a true Horseman.

TOUGHEST OPPONENT

Ric Flair. "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em." Windham's series of matches with the NWA World champion in 1987 were some of the greatest bouts ever fought, but Windham always came up a hair's breadth short against "The Nature Boy." So, partly out of frustration with his inability to win the title (and partly due to a lucrative offer from J.J. Dillon), Windham joined Flair in the Horsemen.

ACHIEVEMENT '88

Special Fan Poll:

VOTE FOR 1988's BEST WRESTLERS AND MATCHES!

Once again it's that most important time of the year—the time when we open the pages of this magazine to wrestling's most incisive experts: our readers. It's up to you to make decisions in 10 categories for the *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* Achievement '88 awards. This is wrestling's most important and prestigious fan poll. Don't be counted out—cast your votes today!

*EACH YEAR, THE readers of **Pro Wrestling Illustrated** are called upon to make a series of important choices that affect the entire wrestling world. Because each year, **PWI** looks to the wrestling's true experts—our readers—to choose the very best the sport had to offer in the 12 months just past. Yes, it's time for you to cast your votes for the **PWI** Achievement '88 awards!*

This is your chance to answer these vital questions: Who were the best wrestlers of the year? Who was the most improved? Who was the most successful manager? The most inspiring wrestler? The rookie of the year? The most popular and the most hated wrestler? Which tag team was the best? What was the year's greatest match? The wildest feud?

And there's the most important question of all: Who deserves to be named Wrestler of the Year?

In this special section, descriptions of the various award categories are included along with last year's winners and an alphabetical listing of 10 of this year's top candidates as of press time. Read the descriptions and take some time to think about your choices for the various awards; your choices, of course, are not limited to the top contenders listed. Then turn to the ballot on page 65 and cast your votes.

*Results of the 1988 **Pro Wrestling Illustrated** Achievement '88 fan poll will be printed in the spectacular year-end double issue of **Pro Wrestling Illustrated**, cover dated March 1988, which will go on sale December 22. Our year-end issue is a super color extravaganza that's always a collector's item. But in order for your vote to count, we **must** have your ballot by December 1, 1988.*

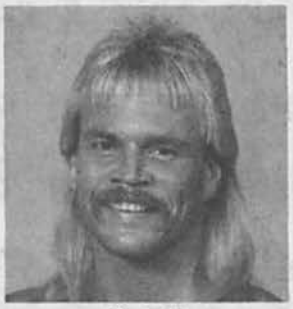
*This is the most respected and prestigious fan poll in all of professional wrestling, and the results will be anxiously awaited by fans and professionals alike. **Every** vote counts. Your voice **must** be heard. Mail in your ballot today!*

ACHIEVEMENT '88

ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

Madusa Miceli

D.I. Bob Carter



Steve Casey

The wrestler you select as Rookie of the Year must fulfill two qualifications: He (or she) cannot have been a winner/runner-up in last year's vote (examples: Owen Hart, Doug Furnas, and Shane Douglas), and the wrestler should have yet to complete a second full year as a pro by the time December 31, 1988, rolls around. You should make two major considerations as you think about your choice: (1) What kind of success did the wrestler have during the past year, and (2) What is this wrestler's potential for future success? Flash-in-the-pan grapplers need not apply. Past Rookies of the Year have included such notables as Ric Flair, Terry Taylor, Lex Luger, Bob Backlund, Tommy Rich, and Rick Steamboat. Remember, a vote for Rookie of the Year is a vote for a possible future world champion.

Top candidates for 1988: D.I. Bob Carter, Steven Casey, Madusa Miceli, Max Pain, John Paul, Brian Pillman, Ricky Rice, Scott Steiner, Jason Sterling, Soldat Ustinov.

1987 Winner: Owen Hart

MOST IMPROVED WRESTLER OF THE YEAR

Jeff Jarrett

The Ultimate Warrior

When picking a candidate for Most Improved Wrestler, pick a man who, throughout 1988, has worked the hardest to improve himself as a technical wrestler. Pick a man who has struggled to learn new maneuvers or a man who has captured a major title for the first time in his career. He can be a rulebreaker or a scientific wrestler, but his improvement should be considered to have been not only significant at year's end, but generally consistent throughout the entire year.

Top candidates for 1988: Big Bossman, Jeff Jarrett, Jerry Lawler, Lex Luger, Don Muraco, Iceman Parsons, Al Perez, Sting, Ultimate Warrior, Warlord.

1987 Winner: Curt Hennig

MOST POPULAR WRESTLER OF THE YEAR

Popularity is one of the most subjective of concepts. One fan's favorite is another fan's object of hatred. Very few wrestlers command the widespread respect necessary to be a fan favorite, let alone be considered the year's Most Popular star. This is a remarkable award in that the winner is a success in the hearts of the fans, regardless of his success in the ring. Some fans will opt to select a wrestler

Hacksaw Duggan

Sting

who observes the rules, who respects the fans, or who is a true sportsman. That's fine, but don't be ashamed if *your* favorite wrestler is none of these things. We want your honest opinion.

Top candidates for 1988: Hacksaw Duggan, Hulk Hogan, Jerry Lawler, Lex Luger, Dusty Rhodes, Jake Roberts, Randy Savage, Sting, Ultimate Warrior, Kerry Von Erich.

1987 Winner: Dusty Rhodes

MOST HATED WRESTLER OF THE YEAR

The beauty of wrestling is that the sport actually encourages fans to hate the wrestlers who *deserve* the fan's ire. And the fans certainly exercise their right to verbally attack their ring enemies. With this in mind, the Achievement '88 awards offer fans a chance to vent their collective spleen on one wrestler. In the past, fan response has been overwhelming; the Most Hated category has proven to be

Ted DiBiase

Eddie Gilbert

our most successful at inciting the fans to send in their ballots.

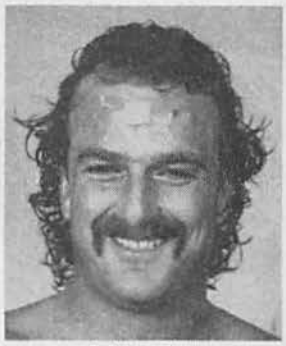
Top candidates for 1988: Andre the Giant, Ted DiBiase, Ric Flair, Ronnie Garvin, Eddie Gilbert, Honky Tonk Man, Iceman Parsons, Buddy Roberts, Rick Rude, Barry Windham.

1987 Winner: Ric Flair

INSPIRATIONAL WRESTLER OF THE YEAR

Jason the Terrible

Jim Garvin



Jake Roberts

A dictionary definition of "inspirational" might include any person who serves as a role model. While that's close, we urge voters not to be limited by the whims of Webster's. "Inspirational" can—and should—mean many things to many people. With most past winners, "inspirational" has come to mean courage in the face of overwhelming adversity. But courage alone is often not enough. Last year's winner, Nikita Koloff, not only battled his opponents courageously, but also demonstrated the dedication of a true friend when he stood beside Magnum T.A. and dedicated his career to the fallen star. That's courage, but it's also a kind of inspiration that goes far beyond any definition of the term.

Top candidates for 1988: Hacksaw Duggan, Jim Garvin, Stan Hansen, Jason the Terrible, Nikita Koloff, Jerry Lawler, Lex Luger, Road Warrior Animal, Jake Roberts, Randy Savage.

1987 Winner: Nikita Koloff

MANAGER OF THE YEAR

J.J. Dillon

Paul E. Dangerously

Elizabeth

A manager is one of wrestling's most unique personalities, and his job varies, depending on the men he manages. At one extreme, a manager offers moral support at ringside; at the other extreme, he can be a complex mixture of strategist, confidant, personal adviser, public relations man, and business manager. Popularity or hatred should not be a factor here. Your choice for Manager of the Year should be the one individual who has enjoyed the most success with his or her wrestler or wrestlers throughout 1988. (Valets who only valet are not eligible for managerial consideration.)

Top candidates for 1988: Jim Cornette, Paul E. Dangerously, J.J. Dillon, Downtown Bruno, Elizabeth, Paul Ellering, Mr. Fuji, Jimmy Hart, Bobby Heenan, Diamond Dallas Page.

1987 Winner: Jimmy Hart

(Continued on page 64)

Scouting Report

A NO-HOLDS BARRED LOOK AT WRESTLING'S TOP STARS

Every other month, *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* Scouting Reports will examine the relative strengths and weaknesses of wrestling's top stars. There will be no punches pulled as the sport's athletes undergo the harshest scrutiny anywhere in the wrestling world

KING HAKU

HOMETOWN: Tongatapu, Tonga
HEIGHT: 6'1"
WEIGHT: 274
YEARS AS PRO: 11
RATING: unrated

STRENGTHS:

- Well rounded. Tonga is an acknowledged master of on-the-mat, aerial, and scientific maneuvers.
- Bobby Heenan. The wily manager has bolstered his man's confidence by proclaiming him the new "King."
- Leaping ability. Boasts a vertical jump of 42 inches, a mark that makes many NBA players blush with envy.

WEAKNESSES:

- Susceptible to injuries. What goes up must come down, and aerial maneuvers take their toll on the entire body.
- Tentative. Haku's aggressiveness suddenly diminishes when his opponent has him hurt.
- Rusty as a singles wrestler. Haku misses his tag team with former partner and countryman Tama.

OTHER COMMENTS: Formerly known as King Tonga . . . Until recently, a member of The Islanders, one of the WWF's finest tag teams . . . Wrestled in the AWA in 1986, managed by Sheik Adnan Al-Kaissie . . . Replaced Harley Race as the WWF "King" following the veteran's abdominal surgery.

OUTLOOK FOR '89: Haku may be the new "King," but he'll be a ruler without a kingdom unless he proves his worth against top-flight competition. Already scorned by fans because of his lavish coronation, Haku needs to meet and defeat members of the WWF top-10 before he can gain status.

HULK HOGAN

HOMETOWN: Venice Beach, CA
HEIGHT: 6'8"
WEIGHT: 302
YEARS AS PRO: 9
RATING: No. 3 in WWF

STRENGTHS:

- Strength and size. A perfect physical specimen, few men in the history of the sport are as well put together as Hogan.
- Unmatched fan support. When beaten down, Hogan draws strength from his supporters like few others.
- Mental fortitude. Truly believes that he cannot be defeated, and history proves his point.

WEAKNESSES:

- Unproven stamina. Untested in lengthy matches, and may be rusty after his layoff.
- Unfocused goals. World title, Megapowers, or family? Hogan is unable—or unwilling—to focus on a singular ambition.
- A target. Despite his loss of the World championship, Hogan is still the man to beat in the WWF.

OTHER COMMENTS: Held the WWF World championship from January 23, 1984 until February 5, 1988, when he lost to Andre the Giant in one of the most disputed decisions ever . . . Clearly the most popular wrestler in the sport's history . . . Recently returned from a five-month vacation.

OUTLOOK FOR '89: Hogan remains wrestling's center, the man around which the sport revolves. He certainly would be considered the top contender for the World title—if he chose to go after it. With "Megapowers" partner Randy Savage holding the belt, a title shot seems unlikely in the near future.

NIKITA KOLOFF

HOMETOWN: Moscow, Russia
HEIGHT: 6'2"
WEIGHT: 275
YEARS AS PRO: 4
RATING: No. 7 in NWA

STRENGTHS:

- Russian sickle. Koloff's favorite finishing maneuver is one of the most effective in the sport.
- Streamlined physique. Nikita's new look has given him added stamina and endurance.
- Fan support. Supporters have rallied to his side since his adoption of American philosophies.

WEAKNESSES:

- Listless. Surprisingly, Koloff's quality of opposition has waned in recent months.
- Knowledge. Despite claims to the contrary, has learned little in way of scientific maneuvers.
- Lacks killer instinct. Happiness with new lifestyle and philosophy seemingly have made Koloff soft.

OTHER COMMENTS: A former holder of the NWA TV and U.S. championships . . . Gave NWA World champion Ric Flair some of his toughest title matches in 1985 and 1986 . . . Took time off early this year to tour schools lecturing about the dangers of drugs.

OUTLOOK FOR '89: Koloff's stock has declined slightly since he returned to the NWA several months ago. He would be better served by setting a goal for himself, such as Barry Windham's U.S. title, instead of fluctuating between tag and singles matches.

ERIC EMBRY

HOMETOWN: Lexington, KY
HEIGHT: 5'10"
WEIGHT: 225
YEARS AS PRO: 12
RATING: No. 5 in World Class

STRENGTHS:

- Temper. One of the few wrestlers in the sport who uses anger to his advantage without losing control.
- Image. Is perceived as a soft touch by some wrestlers, but usually is too much for opponents in his weight class.
- Vast scientific knowledge. Knows virtually every hold ever attempted.

WEAKNESSES:

- Foreign objects. Embry's use of chains and powder is certain death in light of the World Class disqualification rule.
- Suplex happy. Uses the maneuver so much that it has become predictable.
- Loner. No friends at all in an area where alliances are crucial.

OTHER COMMENTS: A former holder of the World Class tag team championship with Frank Lancaster . . . Won the junior heavyweight title from Shaun Simpson on December 25, 1987, in Dallas . . . Held the Mexican junior heavyweight title in 1982.

OUTLOOK FOR '89: Despite stern challenges from many World Class wrestlers, Embry has kept a firm hold on his title. He has announced that he will be taking on junior heavyweights from other federations—an admirable venture, but one that could be put his beloved belt in peril.

MAKHAN SINGH

HOMETOWN: Saginaw, MI
HEIGHT: 6'2"
WEIGHT: 380
YEARS AS PRO: 8
RATING: Stampede North American champion

STRENGTHS:

- Surprising agility. Few 380-pounders can leap from the top turnbuckle with the accuracy of this savage giant.
- Ruthless. Singh is one of the most vicious rulebreakers in pro wrestling.
- Knowledge. His stint as color man on Stampede TV broadcasts has made him keen to the strengths and weaknesses of opponents.

WEAKNESSES:

- Limited stamina. Once a match goes longer than 15 minutes, Singh loses wind and power.
- Karachi Vice. His band of rulebreaking friends constantly interfere—and Singh ends up being disqualified.
- Labeled a coward. Has earned the fans' scorn for his refusal to wrestle fellow rulebreaker Steve DiSalvo.

OTHER COMMENTS: Defeated Owen Hart for the Stampede North American title on May 6 in Calgary . . . Part of the band of rulebreakers known as Karachi Vice, which also includes Vulkan Singh, Gama Singh, Abdul Wizel, and Jerry Morrow.

OUTLOOK FOR '89: Singh has shown his true colors by refusing to wrestle DiSalvo. The big man cannot continue to duck contenders forever, and unless he begins to show more interest in his title, he seems likely to be defeated in the coming months.

BRICKHOUSE BROWN

HOMETOWN: Winter Haven, FL
HEIGHT: 5'10"
WEIGHT: 225
YEARS AS PRO: 4
RATING: No. 1 in CWA

STRENGTHS:

- Flying dropkick. Few wrestlers can deliver an expertly placed dropkick like Brown.
- Scientific repertoire. Although easily dragged into brawls, Brown possesses a wealth of wrestling skills.
- Conditioning. Years of dedication to training have given him one of the sport's best physiques.

WEAKNESSES:

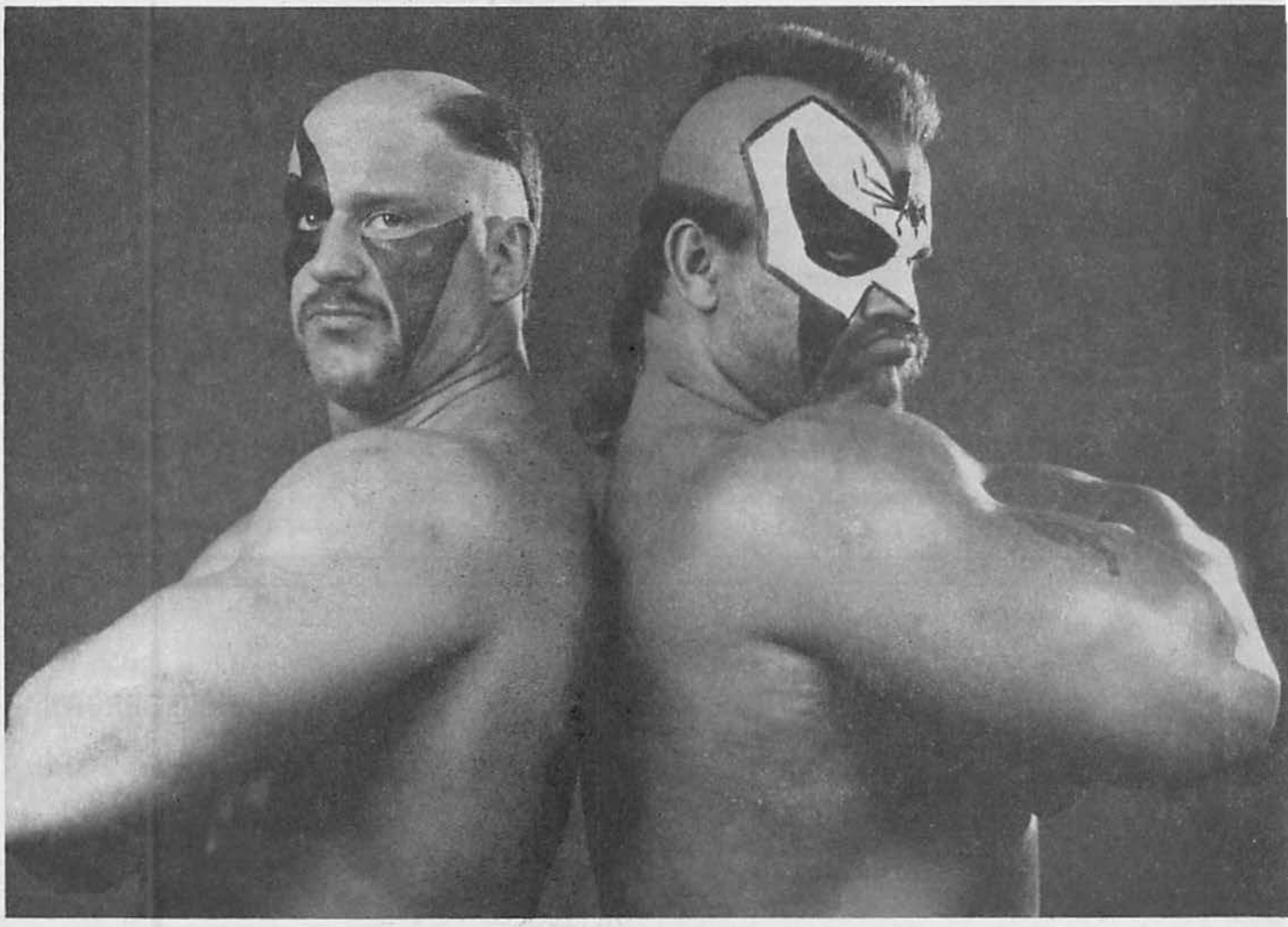
- Sensitive to criticism. Has been sidetracked by Robert Fuller's blatantly racist remarks.
- Short of stature. Brown is dwarfed by many of the opponents he faces.
- Needs guidance. Could use a *scientific* manager to set career goals and aid in strategy.

OTHER COMMENTS: Until recently, a member of Robert Fuller's "Stud Stable" along with Phil Hickerson, Downtown Bruno, Gary Young, and Jimmy Golden . . . A former holder of the CWA championship . . . Wrestled in the Mid-Atlantic states and in Texas early in his career.

OUTLOOK FOR '89: Brown has a new, bright outlook since leaving the Fuller stable. If he is sincere about getting revenge on his former mates, he seems a best bet on regaining the CWA title from Hickerson.

ROAD WARRIORS

"WE'LL WIN THE BELTS



-OR RETIRE!"

The Road Warriors have gone three long years without holding a world title. Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson had best prepare like never before, because Hawk and Animal have vowed to take their belts at Starrcade '88—or it may be the last the world will ever see of them!

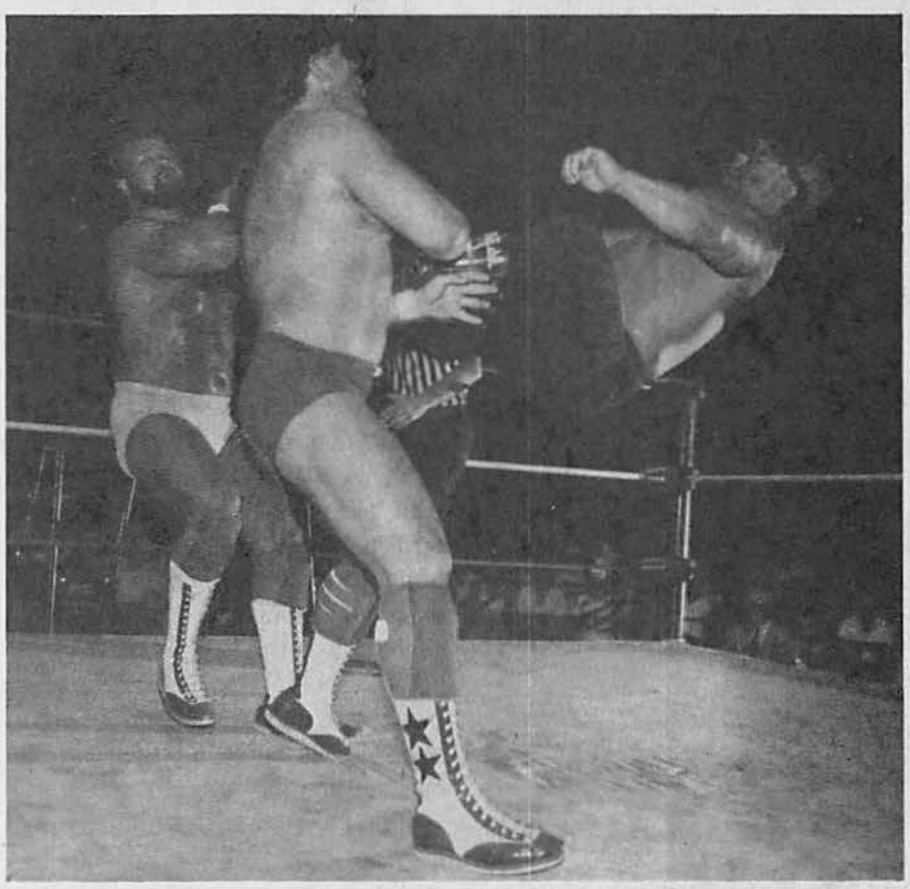
Broken glass, shattered furniture, and running water were everywhere. Animal and Hawk, The Road Warriors, had just lost the AWA World tag team title to the unranked team of Steve Regal and Jim Garvin in one of the most controversial matches of the decade. Frustrated, the 567-pound team decided to enjoy some postmatch carnage at the expense of the St. Paul Civic Center dressing room.

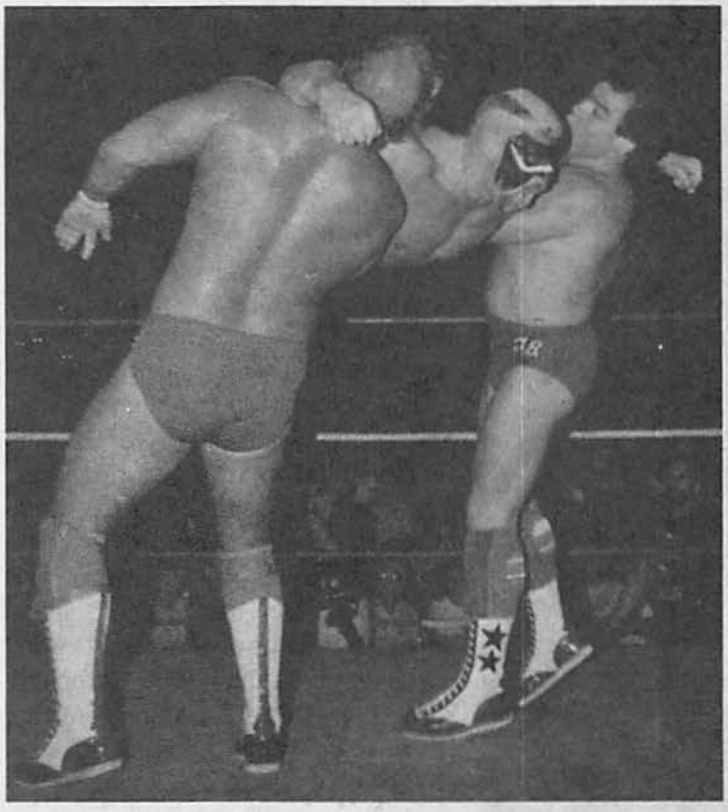
It was September 29, 1985, and the Warriors were at the height of their awesome powers. They realized that it was outside interference on the part of The Fabulous Freebirds that was the deciding factor in losing the title, and they weren't about to take the matter lying down.

"Those lousy little dweebs!" screamed Hawk as he tore a wooden bench from the floor, hurling it against a row of lockers. "If you put the five of those twerps together, they still wouldn't be a decent match for Animal and me. They're all gonna end up as worm food!"

While Hawk was yelling at the frightened reporters, Animal and manager Paul Ellering grew somber as they sat in front of their cubicles. The pensive Animal finally looked up at the circle of journalists that had formed in front of them.

"I'm only gonna say this once," spit Animal. "We may have lost the belts on a bogus decision tonight, but it's only gonna be a matter of days before The Road Warriors, the greatest team in the history of the sport, hold a world tag team title once again. That I promise you."





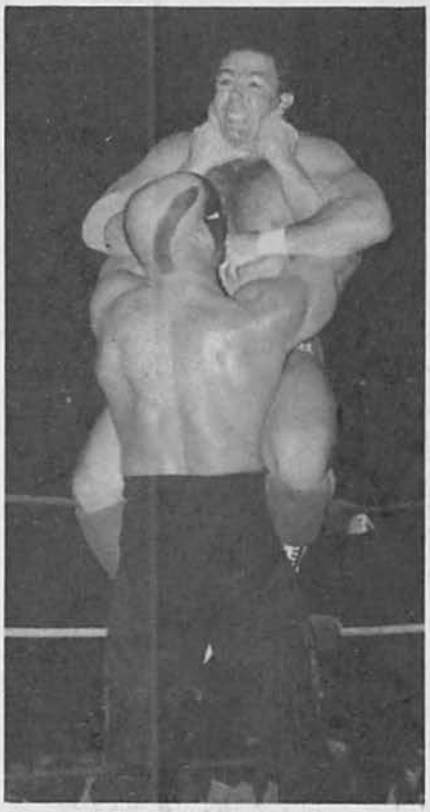
One Road Warrior can easily handle two Horsemen: Animal dropkicks Arn Anderson and Tully Blanchard (above); Hawk clotheslines them (left). The Warriors want Tully and Arn's NWA World tag team title more than anything.

IT'S BEEN MORE than three years since The Road Warriors held a World tag team title. The doubting began more than a year ago. People were claiming that the Warriors were not what they used to be. Now they've gone so far as to say that the Warriors were overrated during their prime.

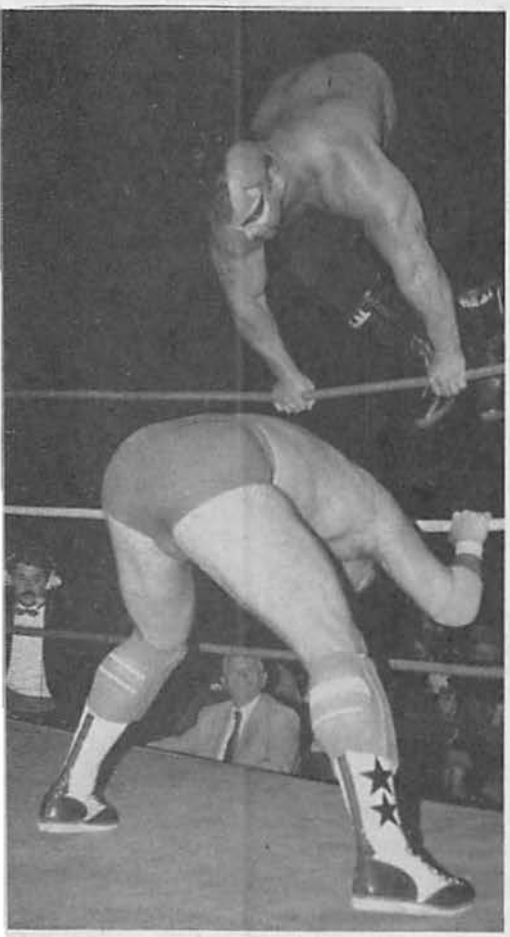
None of this has been lost on their manager, Paul Ellering. "The Legion of Doom has had more than its share of success," he insisted. "Things are going to change around here, I assure you. It is a crime the way we've been overlooked by the NWA in recent months. Why should my champions remain uncrowned?"

Many fans feel the same way. While teams such as The Midnight Express, Sting and Nikita Koloff, and Steve Williams and Dusty Rhodes have received title shots at NWA World tag team champions Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson,

Photos by Len McAlister & Brian Hildebrand



Blanchard has all he can handle from Hawk, who chokes him (above), and Animal, who goes for the sunset flip (below). The Warriors and Paul Ellering want to squelch any reports that their time has past, and winning the belts would be the best way to do it.



the Warriors have been languishing in a meaningless series of matches against Ivan Koloff and The Russian Assassin.

The Warriors have totally dominated Paul Jones' men, but after each victory they've had nothing but a paycheck to show for their efforts. For competitors of this stature, winning is not enough. The Road Warriors are hungry for a World title again. They currently hold the NWA World six-man belts with Dusty Rhodes, and they did have a lengthy run as All-Japan International tag team champions, but that's not enough for the team that believes it is the best in the history of the sport. The Road Warriors won't rest until the *World* championship belts surround their waists once again.

"Win or quit!" raged Animal after his team destroyed the Russians recently. "Enough is enough! Nobody can convince me that Anderson and Blanchard can stand a chance against me and the Hawk. It's been a long time since we held a World title, but we're bigger and better than we've ever been. And if we can't win the NWA World title, we're outta here!"

Once NWA promoters got wind of Animal's comments, they soon sanctioned a title match between the Warriors and Anderson and Blanchard August 26 at The Omni in Atlanta. Just as they had promised, the Warriors dominated the bout from the opening bell, proving they had lost none of the raw power and savagery that helped them earn Tag Team of the Year honors in 1983, 1984, and 1985. Although James J. Dillon interfered in the match, the disqualification victory buoyed the spirts of Ellering.

"Win or quit!" screamed Ellering. "We're never gonna be ignored again! With The Road Warriors as World tag team champions, the NWA will enter a new era of greatness. And if we lose to those puny jerks, then we don't deserve to be wrestlers anyway. We'll just ride into the sunset. Either we win the World title at Starrcade '88, or we'll retire. It's that simple."

Judging from the reaction of NWA promoters, the retirement threats of The Road Warriors have been taken *very* seriously. It seems like everyone in the NWA is looking forward to Starrcade—everyone except Dillon, that is.

"It's just a lot of malarkey designed to get us to sign for the match," claimed The Four Horsemen's executive director. "Ellering thinks he can browbeat the promoters into sanctioning this match, but he doesn't have nearly the clout that *I* do with the championship committee. As far as I'm concerned, there are other fine teams that deserve a title shot."

Dillon seemed confident, but insiders claim that the manager has never been as frightened of a team like he is by The Road Warriors. Reportedly, Dillon has been trying everything in his power to stop the match from being signed.

"Poor J.J. knows his time has finally come," said a disgusted Hawk. "Here's the chance for him to say that his men were the ones to retire the mighty Road Warriors. But you know what? He knows his team hasn't got a snowball's chance in hell of beating us. I think the fans know it, too."

Of course, there is always the chance that the Warriors *could* be beaten by the Anderson and Blanchard, two of the sport's finest tacticians. Regardless of the outcome of the match, Starrcade '88 will surely be the most important event in the careers of Animal and Hawk, two men who have been bred to be champions.

Win or quit? Hawk and Animal as ex-Road Warriors? The Legion of Doom stands at the crossroads, one flying clothesline away from their greatest glory—or one mistake away from their own self-inflicted demise. □

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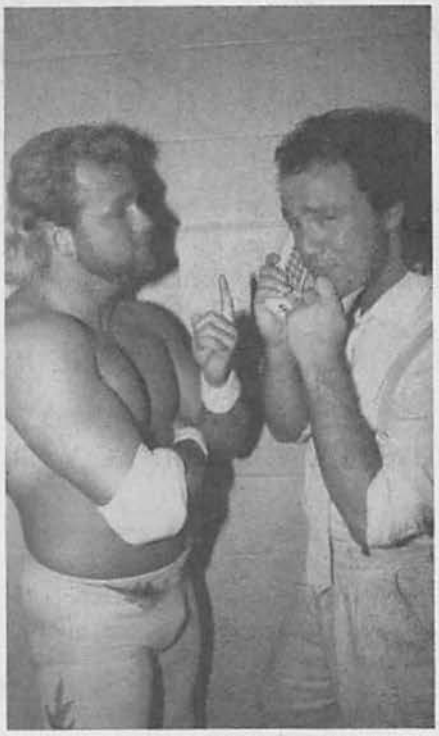
RINGSIDE

(Continued from page 8)

Gilbert and Dangerously didn't think they had a chance of ever wrestling again in the CWF, but to their surprise the fans voted to lift the suspension. A typical response: "If they're gone, they'll just go someplace else and never get punished," wrote fan Pat Carr of Birmingham, Alabama. "Besides, Gilbert and Dangerously add excitement to wrestling here."

Former NWA World champion **Ron Garvin** is now wrestling in the Continental area and has teamed with **Tim Horner** and **Doug Furnas** against **Pvt. Pyle**, **Detroit Demolition**, and **D.I. Bob Carter**. Furnas, by the way, was sidelined with broken ribs following an attack by former friend **Jerry Stubbs** ... **Gen. Skandor Akbar's** new sensation **The Beast**—rumored to be **Kamala's** cousin from Uganda—was disqualified against World Class champ **Kerry Von Erich** when Akbar interfered. Akbar also caused **Kamala's** disqualification in a match against **Terry Gordy** ... AWA women's champion **Madusa Miceli** and former WWF women's champ **Fabulous Moolah** wrestled to a double-disqualification on the September 3 card at Cleveland's Medina County Fairgrounds.

Tommy Rich, another former NWA champ, is despised by the fans in the CWA and recently joined the most hated list in the Southern Championship Wrestling area. A fan poll was held to choose the most popular wrestler in the Southern area from among Rich, **The Bullet**, **Scott Armstrong**, and **Ranger Ross**. Rich joined The Bullet and Ross in congratulating Armstrong for winning but seemed upset. Later in the evening, Rich won a "loser gets 10 lashes" match against **Joel Deaton** and refused to whip Deaton. "I can't whip this poor bum," Rich said to the crowd. "Do you want me to whip someone else?" The fans shouted their approval, but were astonished when Rich whipped guest color commentator Scott Armstrong!



Eddie Gilbert and Paul E. Dangerously had their CWF suspension lifted by the fans in a special write-in vote. They had been suspended for a number of infractions.

Former NWA World champion Lou Thesz is opening a wrestling school in Virginia.

Wild West tag champs **John Tatum** and **Jimmy Jack Funk** (substituting for the injured **Jack Victory**) defeated World Class Texas tag champs **Steve** and **Shaun Simpson** on September 5 in Ft. Worth in a Triple Dome of Terror match. Tatum and Funk will now meet World Class tag champs **The Samoan Swat Team** in a unification match for the WCCW tag title ... NWA officials are making preliminary plans to hold Starrcade '88 at the Greensboro Coliseum ... Two-time former WWF World champion **Bruno Sammartino**, along with **John Cappelletti**, **Tommy Lasorda**, and **Ted Hendricks**, will be inducted into the Italian-American Sports Hall of Fame on January 27 at Caesars in Atlantic City.

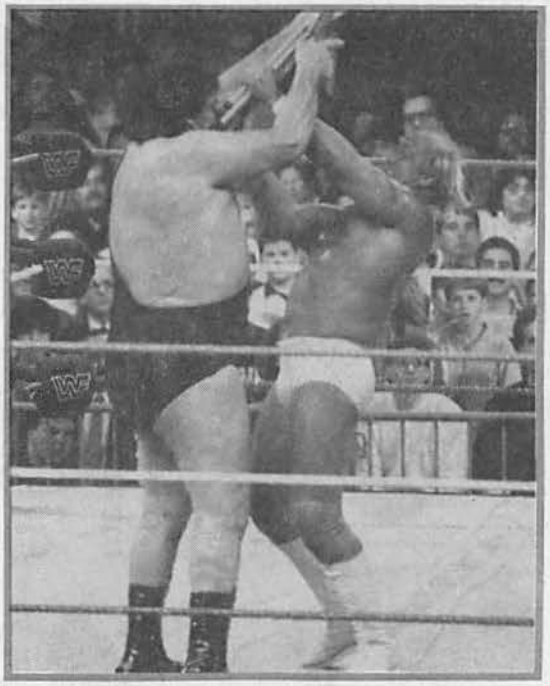
Six-time former NWA World champion **Lou Thesz** reports that all systems are go for his Virginia Wrestling Academy. There's nothing like learning from the best, and Thesz was certainly one of the greatest wrestlers of all-time. Those who are interested in attending can write for information to: Virginia Wrestling Academy; c/o Lou Thesz, P.O. Box 8686, Norfolk, VA, 23503.

Ric Flair was scheduled to defend his NWA World title against **Top Gun** on September 20 in Portland, Oregon. Top Gun, a 250-pounder from parts unknown, wrestles for Don Owens Promotions ... The WWF's second Survivor Series is scheduled for Thanksgiving Day in Richfield, Ohio, and will be available on pay-per-view TV. It will be the WWF's fourth and final PPV event of 1988 ... **Pat Tanaka**, one-half of AWA World tag team champions **Badd Company** with **Paul Diamond**, is going to Japan in October to challenge IWGP junior heavyweight champ **Shiro Koshinaka**.

That's all for now. See you at the matches! □

THIS MONTH IN...

The Wrestler



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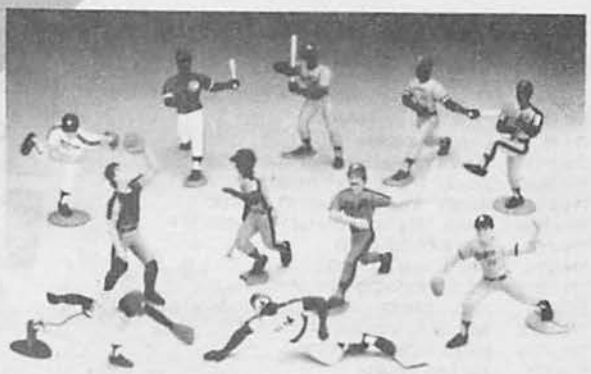

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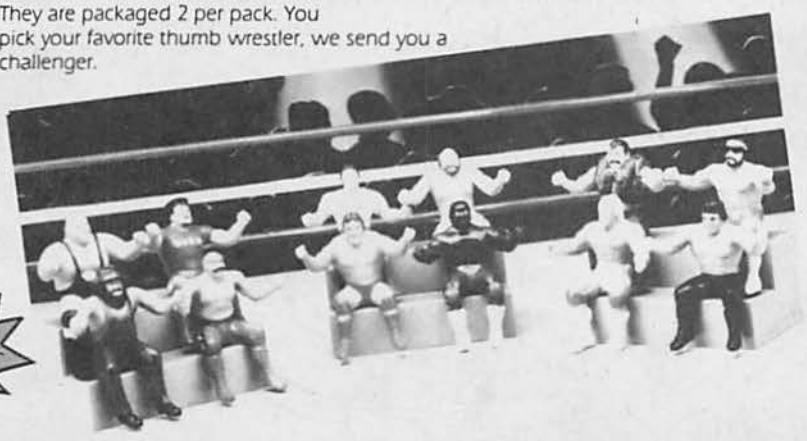

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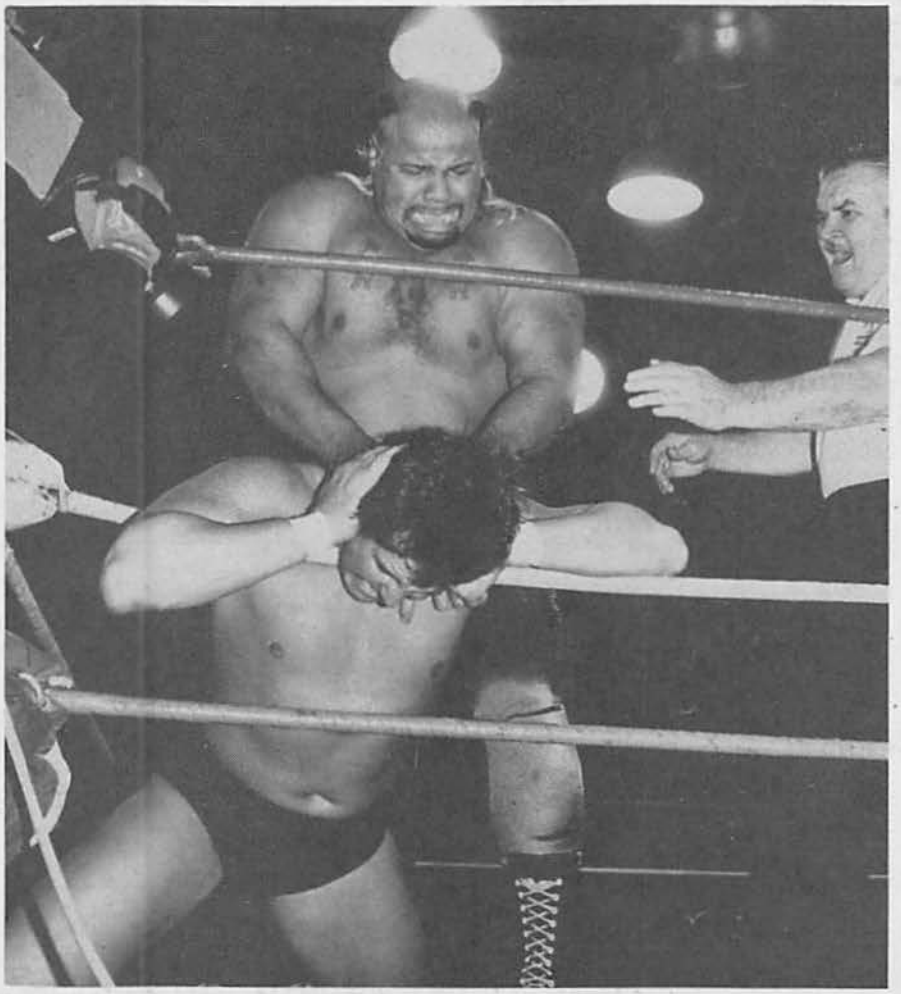

Iceman Parsons chokes former teammate Chris Adams. Adams and Parsons split up over a disagreement at the UWF tag team title tournament in 1987.

you went on to pin Kerry when the lights finally came back on. Some victory.

PARSONS: Wait a minute, here, you fool. Don't mention Terry Gordy. Don't mention Michael Hayes. I don't wanna hear *nothin'* about those traitors.

RODRIGUEZ: Why not?

PARSONS: Because those guys have gone down the wrong path now. Together, Gordy, Buddy Roberts, and myself were the new, *improved* Freebirds, but Gordy went and spoiled everything when he joined back up with Hayes, the lowest skunk ever to lace up a pair of rasslin' boots. Thankfully, Mr. Akbar came back to Texas to aid me in my battles against these guys.

KUNTZMAN: Why did you decide to make Akbar your manager?

PARSONS: What kind of a jive question is that? Everybody knows that there are very few men in the sport who are as intelligent as Akbar, the true manager of champions. When Kerry cheated to defeat me at the Parade of Champions, I realized that I needed someone around to watch my behind. Akbar has led me right to the Texas championship, and with him scheduling my title matches, I should be able to remain champion for as long as I wanna. Ain't nobody gonna break rules to beat me now!

SMITH: It's understandable why you would want a manager, since you always seem to rely on others to win matches for you, especially where championships are concerned. Where will it all end?

PARSONS: It's *never* gonna end until Devastation Incorporated holds all of the titles around here, Jack. My capture of the Texas title is only the beginning. If I can't win the World Class title, I assure y'all that big Kamala can do the trick. Already, my buddies have begun to shift the balance of power away from those Von Erichs. Did you notice how Buddy Roberts' Samoan Swat Team, Fatu and Samu, tore up those two Von Erich turkeys when they won the World Class tag team championship? Now the only title left is Kerry's World Class belt and, as everyone knows, that surely belongs to me. That lowlife mama's boy.

RODRIGUEZ: Why all this hatred against the Von Erich family?

PARSONS: If you know anything about World Class, you know that the Von Erichs always stack the deck against their opponents. They buy off the referees, the officials, and the fans. The Von Erichs are the most insidious, evil people on the face of the earth, and so is anybody that has anything to do with them. I learned a long time ago never to trust the people around here.

KUNTZMAN: It wasn't all that long ago when the fans used to trust *you.* For years, you were one of the most popular wrestlers in the country, but about a year ago something about you changed. It's very sad.

PARSONS: What's sad? The fact that I make more money now than I've ever made before in my life? The fact that now I'm a top contender to every title in wrestling? You writers have your priorities all screwed up. It was just a little over a year ago when I used to shake hands, sign autographs, pose for pictures, and do all the other things that make you magazine guys happy. Then those other "favorites," Chris Adams and Savannah Jack, turned against me during that UWF tag team tournament.

SMITH: Nobody turned against *you.* You were mad at Adams for refusing to accept a tainted victory, and later

you attacked Savannah when Adams picked him as a replacement. As far as I'm concerned, you showed your true colors right there.

PARSONS: **Damn right I did, and it was about time I came to my senses. Those guys were just trying to take advantage of me the same way the Von Erichs did for so many years. Now, *nobody* pulls the wool over the Iceman's eyes anymore. The only men I trust now are Buddy, Akbar, the Samoans, John Tatum, Jimmy Jack Funk, and Black Bart. And if you notice, the balance of power is starting to shift, ever so slowly. I'm the Texas champion. The Samoan Swat Team are the World Class tag team champions. Now, as soon as I win back my World Class title, there will be only one mission left to achieve.**

KUNTZMAN: Mission? What are you talking about?

PARSONS: **What I mean is that it's high time we got rid of Michael Hayes, that turncoat, that traitor. My main man Buddy spent the best years of his life teaming with that guy, and what does he have to show for it? Nothin'! Michael Hayes is second on my hit list, right after the Von Erichs. And if that pretty boy Steve Cox or Gordy want to stick their noses in this mess, me and Buddy will be more than happy to take them out as well.**

RODRIGUEZ: What are your plans for the Texas title? You've got some pretty stiff competition out there with Steven Casey, Bill Irwin, and the Simpsons all screaming for a shot at that belt. And then there's Kevin Von Erich, who held the title until that match when you—*ahem!*—*defeated* Kerry. It looks like you've got your work cut out for you.

PARSONS: **Hey, man, I don't like the tone of your voice at all. You guys can moan and complain all you want, but *I'm* the man who's beaten Kerry Von Erich *twice.* As far as Kevin goes, the only reason he didn't meet me for the title was because he was scared of me. Now that I'm the champion, there's finally a real man in World Class for the fans to look up to. Isn't that nice?** □

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(Continued from page 7)

THE FANS' VOICE

Although Ric Flair was mad enough to chew through a steel pipe at being dropped a notch in your Top 10 ratings (November 1988 "Wrestling Enquirer"), I think it was a good move on the part of your ratings committee.

First of all, Flair is an insult to wrestling. There is no way he should be considered the greatest wrestler of all time. He can't beat the top contenders. Randy Savage, however, does. That's why you guys correctly made him number one.

Flair thinks that just because he has held the NWA World title for most of the last six years and "defended" it against all contenders, he should be considered the greatest wrestler of all time.

However, the "Nature Wimp" fails to realize that the name of the game is pinfalls, an important facet of the game with which Flair has little recent experience. For Flair to retain his belt, all he has to do is get his butt saved by the goons known as The Four Horsemen. Savage never resorts to such tactics. Night after night he wins his matches by pinfall.

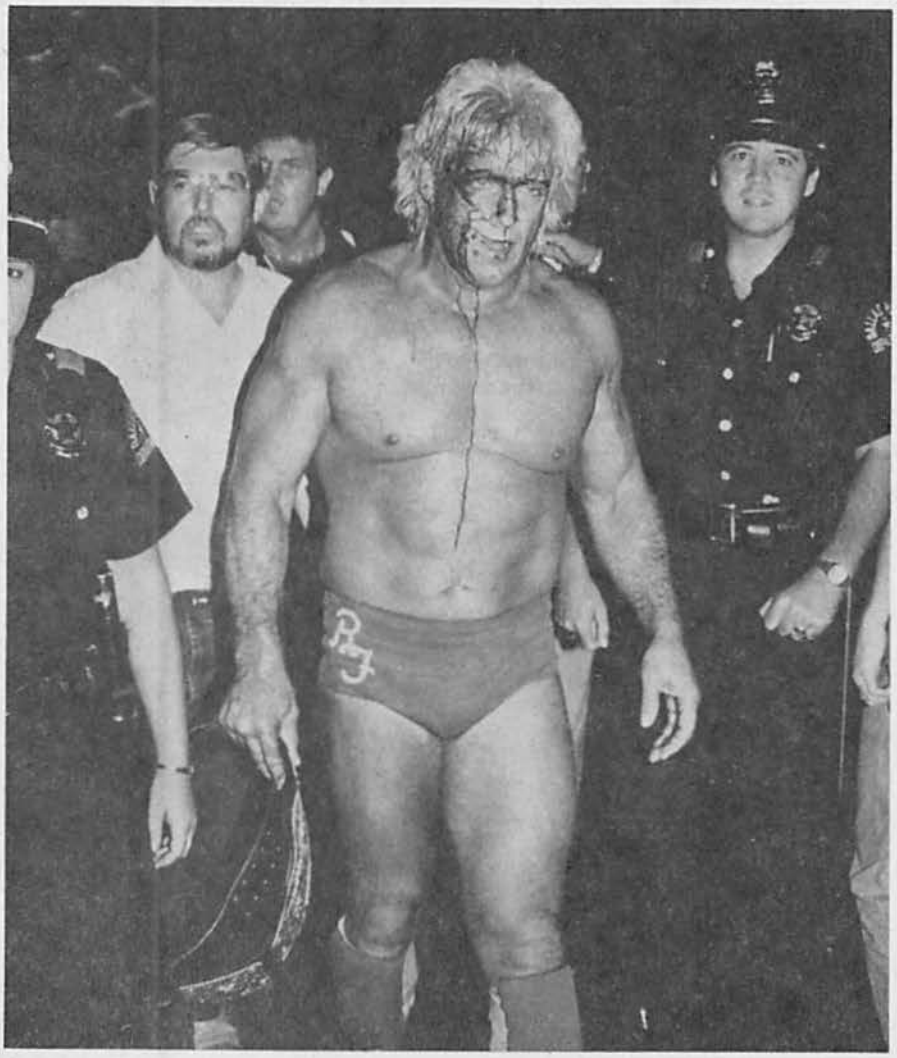
If Flair can't beat his contenders by pinfall, he doesn't deserve to be champion. And he probably won't be, once Lex Luger gets through with him. If Luger doesn't beat Flair this fall, he will certainly beat him in a cage match at Starrcade '88.

Once Flair discovers that he can't beat Luger, he will probably jump to the WWF and make a fool of himself *a la* Harley Race and Terry Funk. Then Savage will have a field day against Flair, and there will no longer be any doubts that Savage is the best wrestler in the world.

NEIL FUCHS
Jackson, NJ

NO RESPECT

I am beginning to get fed up with the lack of respect being shown to the greatest tag team in the history of pro wrestling. Of course, I'm speaking about the NWA U.S. (and soon to be World) tag team champions, The Midnight



Ric Flair leaves the ring exhausted after a successful, though bloody, NWA World title defense. In Neil Fuchs' opinion, Randy Savage, not Flair, is the greatest wrestler in the world.

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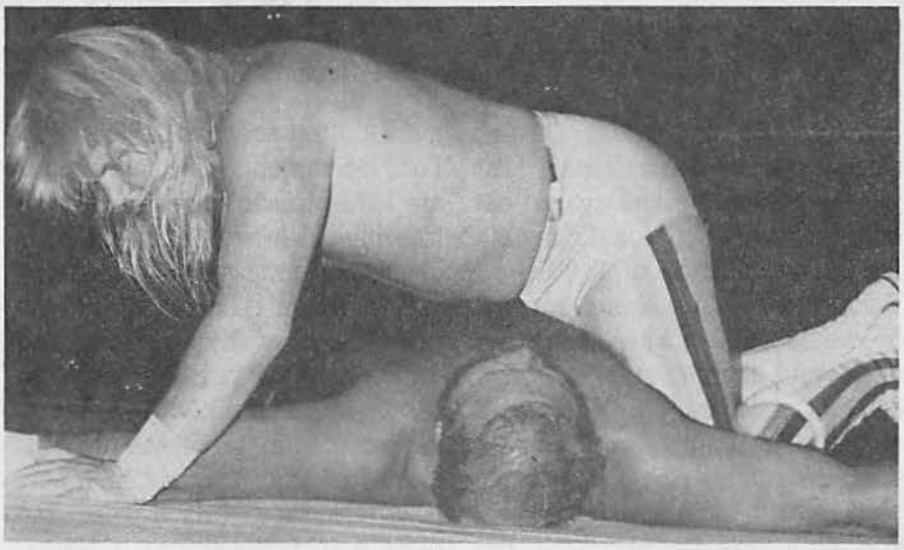
Express. Thanks for your great November 1988 centerfold featuring Stan Lane, Jim Cornette, and Bobby Eaton.

Eaton and Lane are unquestionably the most perfect tag team in wrestling. Bobby goes through the air and Stan handles the ground attack. I guess they will just have to take the World belts away from Tully Blanchard and Arn Anderson for people to wake up and smell the coffee. And when they do, all this disrespect toward the greatest team ever is going to cease!

ROB WOODS
Columbus, OH



Bobby Eaton covers Arn Anderson for the pin. These two old friends are now battling it out as The Midnight Express feuds with The Four Horsemen.

SULLIVAN IS DERANGED

There is no word that can be imagined that can describe Kevin Sullivan's appalling attack on Jimmy Garvin except the word "disgusting." Recently, I have noticed that violence seems to be on the rise in wrestling. And most of it has been commited by Sullivan and his cruel coterie.

Sullivan has been relentless in his pursuit—and subsequent assault—of Garvin's valet Precious. Then, on TV, Sullivan attacked Garvin and hurl cinderblocks onto his leg, breaking it. That's not wrestling. That's not even rule-breaking. That's just inhuman.

But expecting even the slightest element of humanity from Kevin Sullivan is like hoping for money just to appear in your bank account. It just isn't going to happen.

That's why Sullivan should be banned. He's not in wrestling for the sport. He's not in wrestling for the money. He's just in it to injure people. *That's* despicable.

LUCY SCHULTE
New York □

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(Continued from page 12)

highlight of Flair's career. On that steamy day in Irving, Texas, Flair put his title on the line against not only the powerful Von Erich, but the collective force of 43,000 Von Erich fanatics. The mere fact that he would subject himself to such odds—and then fight like a man and not crawl through a loophole in the rules to protect his title—spoke volumes about the inner workings of the man. Ric Flair—The Wrestler—lost the match, but Ric Flair—The Legend—won so much more.

Recently, though, that legend has taken a beating. Besides limiting the scope of his title defenses, Flair has begun to rely more and more on the services of his fellow Four Horsemen. Wrestling experts are hard-pressed to remember the last time Flair won a match by a clean, non-controversial pinfall.

He's been lambasted in the press, scorned by the fans, and dropped in the ratings. His image has been hurt terribly. And, finally, he has begun to realize that his place in history may not be so secure. He sees Jerry Lawler, the new AWA champion, elevating the value of his title by wrestling around the country against wrestlers from other federations. Ironically, his most notable opponent has been Kerry Von Erich.

In interviews, Lawler has taken indirect shots at Flair, claiming that *he* is a *true* world champion, because *he* has the courage to wrestle anyone and everyone. Flair, perhaps sensing that Lawler is on the verge of passing him in the ratings, has reacted not with words, but with actions.

He has scheduled a title defense in Portland, Oregon, against Top Gun and, sources say, he has even talked to World Class about making a title defense in Texas. Assuming these tours materialize, Flair will not be accompanied by his fellow Horsemen. If he is to win, he'll have to win on his own. If he loses, he loses only a title. He can get that back in a rematch. If he loses his reputation as a great champion, he might never get it back.

And a brilliant career will have, in his eyes at least, been wasted. □

Ric Flair attempts to put the figure-four leglock on Kerry Von Erich during their thrilling NWA World title match in 1984.

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January 1985/COLOR PINUP: Tito Santana. **Road Warriors,** Billy Jack, Hayes, 1984 fan ballot.

February 1985/COLOR PINUP: Magnum T.A. **Rick Martel,** Hogan, Backlund, Ellering.

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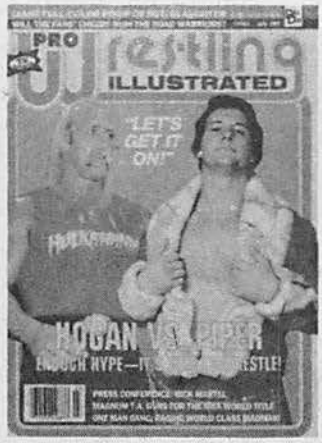

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July 1985/COLOR PINUP: Sgt. Slaughter. **Hogan vs. Piper,** Warriors, One Man Gang, T.A., Martel.

September 1985/COLOR PINUP: Junkyard Dog. **Magnum T.A,** Von Erich, Hogan, AWA scouting reports.

October 1985/COLOR PINUP: Chris Adams. **Rick Steamboat,** Warriors, Nikita, WWF scouting reports.

November 1985/COLOR PINUP: Randy Savage. **Ric Flair,** Slaughter, Steamboat, World Class scouting reports.

December 1985/COLOR PINUP: Jesse Ventura. **Great American Bash,** Von Erich, Orndorff, Williams & DiBiase.

January 1986/COLOR PINUP: Hacksaw Duggan. **Hulk Hogan,** T.A., Brody.

February 1986/COLOR PINUP: Nikita Koloff. **Mike Von Erich,** Warriors, Santana, Taylor, Barbarian, Race.

April 1986/COLOR PINUP: Ric Flair. **Wendi Richter,** Adams & Hernandez, Dusty & Warriors vs. Flair & Andersons.

May 1986/COLOR PINUP: Rick Steamboat. **Road Warriors,** Humongous, Bulldogs, Hansen vs. Martel.

June 1986/COLOR PINUP: Kevin Von Erich. **Hulk Hogan,** Adams, Duggan, Scott Hall.

July 1986/COLOR PINUP: King Kong Bundy. **R & R Express,** Hall and Hennig, Ventura, Warriors.

August 1986/COLOR PINUP: Dusty Rhodes. **Randy Savage,** Lugar vs. Race, Blanchard vs. Flair, Rude.

October 1986/COLOR PINUP: John Studd. **Nikita Koloff,** Savage vs. Bundy, Landell, Flair vs. Lugar, Simpson.

November 1986/COLOR PINUP: Baby Doll. **British Bulldogs,** Von Erich, Hansen, Gordy, Flair-Tully-Arn-Ole.

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January 1987/COLOR PINUP: Fabulous Freebirds. **Roddy Piper,** Nikita vs. T.A., Snuka, Simpson.

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August 1988/COLOR PINUP: Al Perez. **Savage & Hogan,** Gilbert-Lawler, Four Horsemen, Kerry Von Erich.

October 1988/COLOR PINUP: Ultimate Warrior. **Sting,** Savage, Lawler, Williams, Steamboat, Varsity Club.

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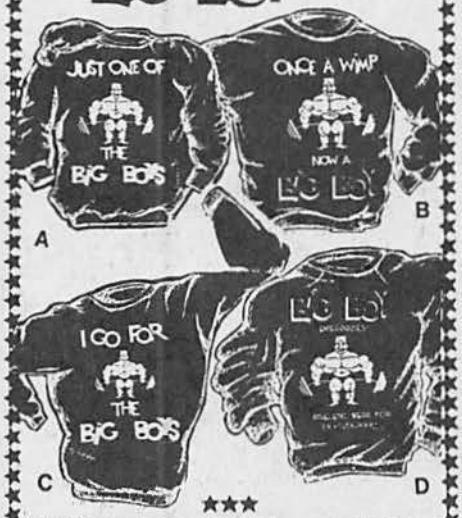

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(Continued from page 16)

tack is as ludicrous as it is illegal. A boxer would be automatically disqualified for such an action.

On the other hand, wrestlers are rewarded. In fact, I see no reason why a wrestler *shouldn't* attack his opponent before the bell rings. At SummerSlam 88, five of the 10 matches "began" with before-the-bell attacks. Since the referees have no regard for the rules—or simply are too lazy to enforce them—the wrestlers don't, either.

It is entirely within a referee's power to disqualify a wrestler before the match begins. Recently in Knoxville, Tennessee, Jerry Lawler was scheduled to defend his AWA World title against Doug Furnas. During the preliminary instructions, the referee found a foreign object in Lawler's boot and ordered him disqualified. There have been other occasions when the referee disqualified a wrestler or team before the opening bell. But I've never seen it in the case of before-the-bell attacks.

This non-rule wouldn't be so bad if the referee tried to restore order before starting the match. Because of the unusually violent nature of wrestling, tempers often run high. And while I think a wrestler should be disqualified for a before-the-bell attack, a cooling-down period would be a good compromise. Even with the cooling-down period, however, the man attacked could be hurt, worn down, and thrown off his game plan.

It's time to bring some common sense to wrestling's rules. This is simply nonsense.

* * *

If you watched SummerSlam 88 on pay-per-view TV, you probably saw several advertisements for the November 7 Sugar Ray Leonard vs. Don Lalonde WBC super middleweight/WBA light heavyweight fight at Caesars Palace, as well as a live interview of Leonard conducted by Gene Okerlund. This was the first phase of a promotional campaign by the WWF's parent company, Titan Sports, which purchased the PPV rights to Leonard-Lalonde.

Don Lalonde and Sugar Ray Leonard will square off in a title fight that is being promoted on pay-per-view by Titan Sports, the WWF's parent company.

It was a major coup for Titan, which outbid boxing giants Shelly Finkel and Bob Arum for the PPV rights.

"I bid $6.5-million for the rights, and I may have gone more," said Finkel. "Everybody in the pay-per-

view business bid for it." Estimates of Titan's winning bid range from $9-million to $12-million, although Titan refuses to disclose the exact amount.

"If the numbers are true," Finkel added, "they can't make money. The $29.95 to receive the fight might be too high, and the $9-million they paid *is* too high. I think something in the $6-million to $7-million range would've been right.

"Let's figure they clear 11 million homes as a universe," Finkel continued. "They'll probably cut a deal with the cable companies of 50-50. Then they'll have to go system-to-system to sell it. At $29.95 a ticket, we take 95 cents off the top for the cable systems to promote, so we're working with $29. Figuring at a buy rate of 5 percent, which sounds about right, the WWF will gross $8,047,500 in this country on pay-per-view.

"Then, if you figure another $750,000 in Canada, which is outrageous, plus the promotional expenses, they'll lose half a million on PPV. I can't see them making money off of it. I don't even see these numbers holding up. Across the nation, this is a good event, but not a spectacular."

Of course, Finkel is well aware of Titan's success with its WWF pay-per-view spectaculars, such as WrestleMania III, WrestleMania IV, The Survivor Series, and SummerSlam. "I think they're real good, but this is not the same as wrestling," Finkel said. "I don't think they understand boxing, but they're very good at pay-per-view."

There is a possibility that Titan Sports is more interested in getting involved in boxing than actually making a profit on its first venture into the sport. In that case, Titan would be willing to suffer a loss on Leonard-Lalonde in hopes of a bigger future payday. □

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(Continued from page 20)

heard that cretin attempt to speak, I have hoped that someone would shut him up. In teaming with that champion of teenage idiocy, Rick Morton, Nikita has found a partner who matches him in spitting out mindless drivel. Although Morton's comments are nothing but simpleminded lies, at least we can understand what he is saying—or should I say it's too bad we can understand him.

A cottonmouthed Dusty Rhodes idolizer and a blind man's Ric Flair. What do you think of wrestling's latest reason to barf?

PATTIE LARUE
Arkadelphia, AR

Dear Pattie,

Anyone caught praying at the Temple of Dusty Rhodes should immediately forfeit their citizenship. In the case of ex-contender Nikita Koloff, he should go back to wrestling bears in carnival sideshows. As for Rick Morton, I find it hard to improve on your copy, young lady.

Dear Ellner,

After watching 30 hours of wrestling a week, you get a sixth sense of what will eventually happen. My wrestling E.S.P. tells me that The Megapowers will not last very long. Hogan is a snake in the grass. He pretended to be friends with Savage just to get close to Elizabeth. When he gains her afffection, he'll dump "The Macho Man." Their ensuing feud, I predict, will be the main event for WrestleMania V. What do you think?

BARNARD BAKER
Ft. Campbell, KY

Dear Barnard,

It's my long-standing belief that Hulk Hogan is a self-serving, selfish, pompous egotist who would sell his wife, mother, and daughter into white slavery to ensure his name remains on page one.

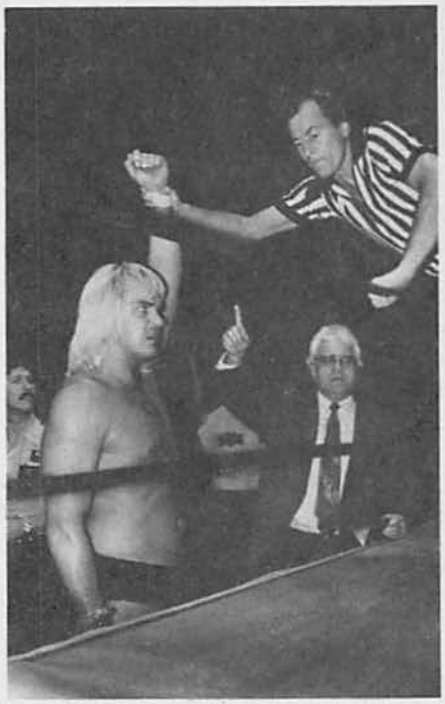
Dear Mr. Ellner,

I never liked The Four Horsemen or their administrator, James J. Dillon, but I always admitted they had more intelligence than most wrestlers. However, with the addition of Barry "Geek" Windham, I wonder what must be on Dillon's mind. Did he feel sorry for Windham and decide to give him a chance? I had the slightest ray of hope that Windham would improve under the supervision of Dillon, but—alas!—once a geek, always a geek.

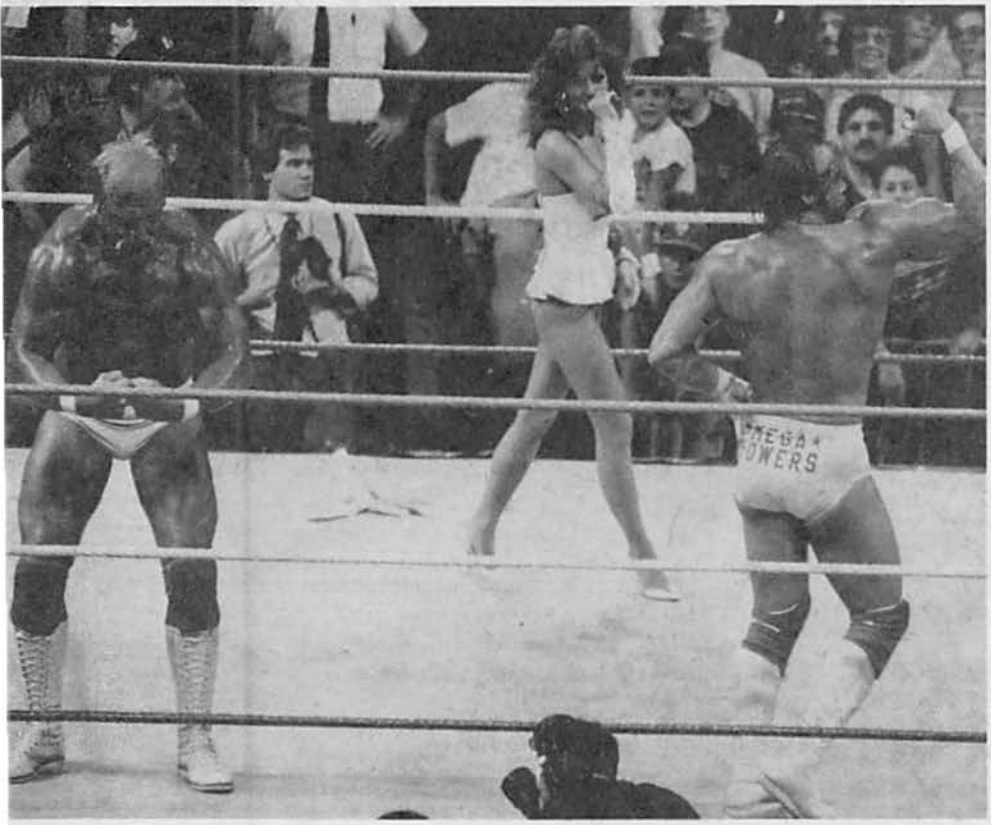
SUE SHEEHAN
Naples, FL

Dear Sue,

There is a problem with your selection of adjectives. Barry Windham, as most of us know, is a Pandering Twit. His cringing and gutless disposition have earned him the title, and he gives no indication of abdicating the throne. The actual definition of "geek" is derived from 19th century carnival sideshows and describes one who bites the heads off live chickens, an appellation better used to describe Windham's nerdy brother, Kendall. Although it would not be inappropriate (assuming the geek then chews and swallows the bird) for Dusty ("I'll Eat Colonel Sanders Out Of Business") Rhodes. □



Barry Windham gets his hand raised, thanks in part to J.J. Dillon. More and more readers are agreeing with me that Windham shouldn't have been allowed to become a Horseman.



Hulk Hogan and Randy Savage—The Megamorons—flex for their own gratification as Elizabeth watches . . . "The Hulkster." These three make me sick.

BACK ISSUES OF

Inside Wrestling

VICTORY SPORTS SERIES

Be sure to fill in the gaps in your collection of INSIDE WRESTLING, "The magazine that rips the lid off pro wrestling." Get all the information you need to keep up on the pro wrestling scene. Don't be left out. Avoid sellouts—order today!

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September 1982/Stories include: Atlas, Piper, Lawler, Brody.
October 1982/Stories include: Rich, Andre, Piper, Dillon.
November 1982/Stories include: Flair, Snuka, Von Erich, Slaughter.
December 1982/Stories include: Mulligan, Rich, Lawler, Grand Wizard.
February 1983/Stories include: Rhodes, Hogan, DiBiase, Race.
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May 1983/Stories include: Rich, Snuka, Sullivan, Steamboat.
June 1983/Stories include: Studd, Garvin, Rogers, Orton.
July 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Freebirds, Rhodes, Youngblood.
August 1983/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Garvin, Sullivan, Lawler.
September 1983/Stories include: Zbyszko, Piper, Andre, Hayes.
October 1983/Stories include: Wrestling II, Backlund, Junkyard Dog, Rhodes.
November 1983/Stories include: Hogan, Reed, Von Erich, Dillon.
December 1983/Stories include: Von Erich, Samoans, Valiant, Road Warriors.
March 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Rich, Rhodes, Garvin.
April 1984/Stories include: Flair, Steamboat, Superstar, Windham.
May 1984/Stories include: Iron Sheik, Steamboat, Rotundo, Von Erich.
June 1984/Stories include: Flair, Slaughter, Cornette, DiBiase.
July 1984/Stories include: Valiant, Flair, Martel, Wrestling II.
August 1984/Stories include: Junkyard Dog, Magnum T.A., Idol, Spoiler.
September 1984/Stories include: Martel, Brody, Von Erich, Iron Sheik.
October 1984/Stories include: Billy Jack, Road Warriors, Steamboat, Piper.
November 1984/Stories include: Rhodes, Rich, Hernandez, Warriors.
December 1984/Stories include: Hogan, Warriors, Sullivan, Magnum T.A.
January 1985/Stories include: Magnum T.A., Rhodes, Atlas, Von Erich.
February 1985/Stories include: Rich, Adams, Valiant, Flair.
March 1985/Stories include: Backlund, Billy Jack, Koloffs, Von Erichs.

APRIL 1985

April 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Albano & Hogan, Steamboat, Gordy.
May 1985/Stories include: Slaughter, Garvin, Albano, Koloffs.
June 1985/Stories include: Warriors, Slaughter, Von Erichs, Studd & Patera.
July 1985/Stories include: Hogan, Von Erich, Nikita, Warriors.
August 1985/Stories include: Wrestlemania, Zbyszko vs. The Tonga Kid.
September 1985/Stories include: Piper, Flair, Fantastics, Magnum T.A.
October 1985/Stories include: Russian menace, Von Erichs, Rude & Barr.
November 1985/Stories include: Steamboat, Adams, Freebirds, Cornette.
December 1985/Stories include: Santana, Brody, Andersons, Murdoch.
January 1986/Stories include: Steamboat, Mike Von Erich, Warriors.
February 1986/Stories include: R'n'R Express, Warriors, Mulligan & Windham.
March 1986/Stories include: Windham & Rotundo, Warriors-Russians, Rude.
April 1986/Stories include: Scott Hall, Rhodes, Flair, Andre, Bill Watts
May 1986/Stories include: Randy Savage, Stan Hansen, Rock 'n' Rolls.
June 1986/Stories include: Bulldogs, Windham-Flair, Lance Von, Blanchard.
July 1986/All-American Special Issue. Stories include: Hogan, Slaughter, T.A.
August 1986/Stories include: WrestleMania 2, Garvins, Martel, Fab Ones.
September 1986/Stories include: Andre,Rhodes-T.A., Adams, Windham.
October 1986/Stories include: Flair-Lugar, Savage, Fantastics, Warriors.
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November 1987/Stories include: War Games, Mr. T, Bulldogs, Rhodes.

DECEMBER 1987

December 1987/Stories include: Freebirds, Rhodes, Magnum, Savage, Perez.
January 1988/Stories include: R&R-Horsemen, Hogan, Flair-Garvin.
February 1988/Stories include: Savage, Kevin Von, Sting, Tully & Arn.
March 1988/Stories include: Bigelow, Adams, Koloff, Honky Tonk, Freebirds.
April 1988/Stories include: Luger-Flair, Ultimate Warrior, Andre-Hogan-DiBiase.
May 1988/Stories include: Zbyszko, DiBiase, Warriors, Rockers, Fritz Von.
June 1988/Stories include: Warriors, Savage, R&R Express, Baby Doll.
July 1988/Stories include: Hogan-Savage-DiBiase, Kerry & Hayes, Sting.
August 1988/Stories include: Savage, Missy Hyatt, Sting, Hayes, Honky Tonk.
September 1988/SPECIAL ISSUE: Color coverage of WMIV, Parade of Champs, Crockett Cup. Plus: Lawler, Von Erich, Hart, Cornette.
October 1988/Stories include: Megapowers vs. Megabucks, Horsemen, Lawler.
November 1988/Stories include: Kerry vs. Lawler, Windham, Luger, Muraco.

INSIDE WRESTLING

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ACHIEVEMENT '88 (Continued from page 41)

FEUD OF THE YEAR

Every year there are some feuds that stretch out longer than others, wars that capture the imagination of fans for months on end and seem to embody the very essence of the sport. The criteria are simple. Your choice for Feud of the Year must be one that lasted at least two months, that you feel has dominated the careers of the participants to the exclusion of all other activities, and that—most important—electrified the world of wrestling like no other!

Top candidates for 1988: Arn Anderson & Tully Blanchard vs. The Midnight Express, Andre the Giant vs. Hacksaw Duggan, Barbarian & Warlord vs. The Road Warriors, Brutus Beefcake vs. Honky Tonk Man, Ted DiBiase vs. Randy Savage, Ric Flair vs. Lex Luger, Michael Hayes vs. Buddy Roberts, Curt Hennig vs. Jerry Lawler, Iceman Parsons vs. Kerry Von Erich, Jake Roberts vs. Rick Rude.

1987 Winner: The Four Horsemen vs. The Superpowers & The Road Warriors

MATCH OF THE YEAR

Randy Savage vs. Ted DiBiase

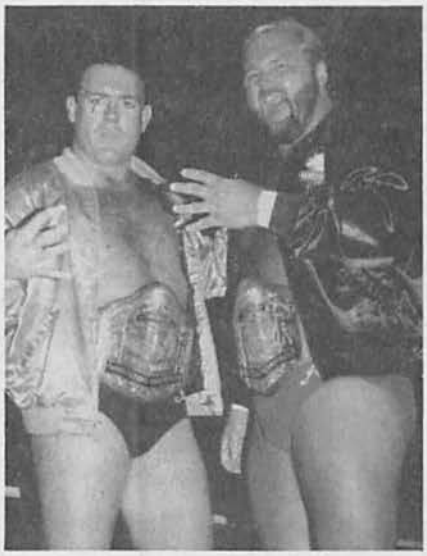
Lex Luger vs. Ric Flair

It's not just your average exciting main event that can be chosen Match of the Year. In the past, *PWI* Achievement awards have gone out to the one match that forced monumental changes on the game. The bout chosen as Match of the Year should have historic significance (such as a major title change or a loser-leave-town match), though that is not a specific requirement. The main considerations are action, drama, and, of course, pure wrestling excitement.

Top candidates for 1988: February 5: Andre the Giant defeats Hulk Hogan; March 25: Kerry Von Erich wins World Class belt from Al Perez; March 27: Ric Flair vs. Sting; March 27: Randy Savage defeats Ted DiBiase to win WWF title tournament; April 23: Sting & Lex Luger defeat Tully Blanchard & Arn Anderson in Crockett Cup final; May 9: Jerry Lawler wins AWA belt from Curt Hennig; May 13: Barry Windham wins U.S. title tournament final over Nikita Koloff; July 10: Ric Flair vs. Lex Luger; August 29: Megabucks vs. Megapowers; August 29: Ultimate Warrior wins WWF I-C belt from Honky Tonk Man.

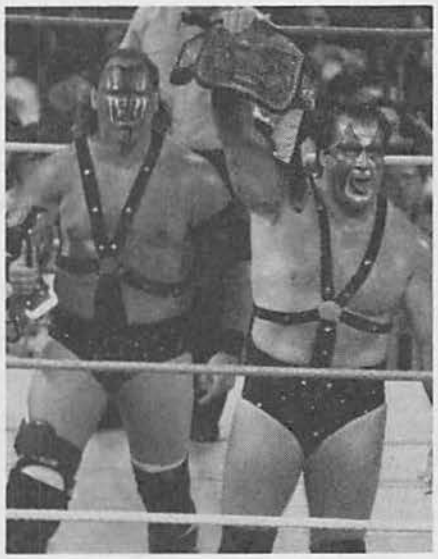
1987 Winner: Randy Savage vs. Rick Steamboat at WrestleMania III

TAG TEAM OF THE YEAR



Tully Blanchard & Arn Anderson

Pat Tanaka & Paul Diamond



Demolition

It seems that every year the contest for Tag Team of the Year gets more heated. Experience, skill, and success all count in this category. Just as with the other major awards, however, whether a team is scientific or rulebreaking should make no difference. An important note: Teams competing regularly in six-man competition are eligible for this award.

Top candidates for 1988: Arn Anderson & Tully Blanchard, Barbarian & Warlord, Demolition, Paul Diamond & Pat Tanaka, Fantastics, Hart Foundation, Midnight Express, Road Warriors, Shaun & Steve Simpson, Kerry & Kevin Von Erich.

1987 Winners: The Midnight Express

WRESTLER OF THE YEAR

Ric Flair

Jerry Lawler

Randy Savage

This is the top honor. The winner of this award should be the one wrestler who has simply been the best wrestler of 1988. Talent, skill, and achievement are the three prerequisites for this category. The man chosen as Wrestler of the Year should be the most well-rounded athlete in the sport. He should have contributed something of lasting worth to the history of professional wrestling. The Wrestler of the Year is the one man man who represents wrestling excellence in every respect. Will Hulk Hogan repeat this year, or will Ric Flair regain control of this category? Or will someone else establish a new domination of the sport? Your votes will decide!

Top candidates for 1988: Ric Flair, Hulk Hogan, Honky Tonk Man, Jerry Lawler, Lex Luger, Dusty Rhodes, Randy Savage, Sting, Kerry Von Erich, Barry Windham.

1987 Winner: Hulk Hogan

YOUR "UNOFFICIAL OFFICIAL" AWARD

This category asks you to do a little bit of creative work. We want you to come up with your own awards category and name the recipient of that award. Don't be afraid to be outlandish or ridiculous—the more creative the better! Last year, nearly 150 "Unofficial Official" awards were presented in our special 100-page double-issue year-end edition of *PWI*, and this year's March issue will present another dose of year-end fun. Get crazy—come up with something outrageous and send it along!

Some awards from last year: Jon Bon Jovi Lookalike Of The Year (And First Runner-Up): Shaun & Steve Simpson ... Scum-Sucking Sewer-Crawler of the Year: Eddie Ellner ... Maybe I'm Wrong, But He Sure Does Sound Constipated Award: Randy Savage ... Biggest Flunky: Virgil ... Road Warrior Wanna-Bes: Demolition.

OFFICIAL FAN BALLOT

Send ballot to: ACHIEVEMENT '88 VOTE
c/o Pro Wrestling Illustrated, Box 48, Rockville Centre, NY 11571

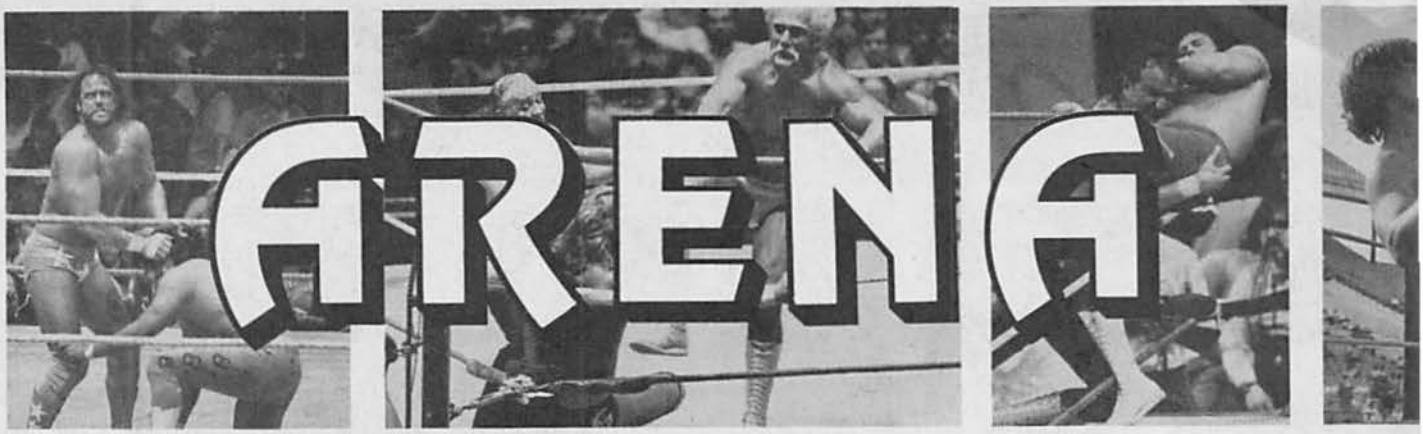
HERE ARE MY VOTES FOR THE BEST OF 1988:

Rookie Of The Year: Ricky Rice & TODD MORTON
Most Improved Wrestler of the Year: STING
Most Popular Wrestler of the Year: STING
Most Hated Wrestler of the Year: Kevin Sullivan
Inspirational Wrestler of the Year: STING & Lex Luger
Manager of the Year: ELIZABETH
Match of the Year: April 23 Sting & Lex Luger vs Arn & Tully
Feud of the Year: Jimmy Garvin & Kevin Sullivan
Tag Team of the Year: Rock-n-Roll Express & STING & Luger
Wrestler of the Year: STING
My "Unofficial Official" Award For 1988: Best Butt & Legs: STING | Traitors of the Yr.: Road Benedict Arnold Award: Warriors

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

NAME: Angie Sexton AGE: 20
STREET: 2309 Quail Hollow Rd
CITY Knox STATE: TN ZIP 37923

We welcome any and all suggestions and comments you may have, or added nominations for "Unofficial Official" awards. Feel free to include extra remarks on an additional sheet of paper.



This special feature is for all fans who want to know who won and who lost . . . and how. *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* will print eyewitness reports from correspondents who attend the matches. If you'd like to have your correspondent report printed in the world's largest-selling wrestling magazine, send it to: *Arena Report; PWI, Box 48; Rockville Centre, NY 11571.*

AGRICULTURAL HALL (Allentown, PA): **The British Bulldogs** defeated **Demolition** by disqualification . . . **Greg Valentine** downed **Don Muraco** . . . **Ken Patera** beat **The Iron Sheik** . . . **Terry Taylor** pinned **S.D. Jones** . . . **Mike Sharpe** destroyed **George Skaaland.**

—Eric Minnich

CAPITOL CENTRE (Landover, MD): **Randy Savage** and **Andre the Giant** battled to a double-countout . . . **Ultimate Warrior** defeated **The Honky Tonk Man** by disqualification . . . **Warlord** & **Barbarian** destroyed **The Bolsheviks** . . . **King Haku** and **Tito Santana** wrestled to a draw . . . **The Rougeaus** beat **The Hart Foundation** . . . **Big Bossman** brutalized **Sam Houston** . . . **Curt Hennig** pinned **Lanny Poffo** . . . **Terry Taylor** defeated **D.J. Peterson.**

—Scott Nyberg

COLUMBUS MUNICIPAL AUDITORIUM (Columbus, GA): **Lex Luger** & **Sting** defeated **Ric Flair** & **Barry Windham** by disqualification . . . **The Midnight Express** battled **Arn Anderson** & **Tully Blanchard** to a double-disqualification . . . **Steve Williams** pinned **Rick Steiner** . . . **Ron Simmons** pinned **Rip Morgan** . . . **Italian Stallion** demolished **Kendall Windham** . . . **The Fantastics** beat **Kevin Sullivan** & **Mike Rotundo** . . . **Nikita Koloff** downed **Al Perez** by disqualification.

—Stephen Marsh

CRANDON HIGH SCHOOL (Crandon, WI): **Stoney Burke** battled **Terminator I** to a draw . . . **Brad Rheingans** pinned **Terminator II** . . . **Baron Von Raschke** defeated **Soldat Ustinov** . . . **Wahoo McDaniel** beat **Teijho Kahn** . . . **Ricky Rice** & **John Paul** defeated **Pat Tanaka** & **Paul Diamond** by disqualification.

—Justin Clapper

FAIRGROUNDS PAVILION (Tulsa, OK): **Matt Borne** wrestled to a draw against **Jimmy Jack Funk** . . . **Shaun Simpson** destroyed **Jack Victory** in a bloody chain match . . . **Iceman Parsons** lost to **Steve Simpson** by disqualification . . . **Steve Cox** & **Michael Hayes** defeated **The Samoan Swat Team** by disqualification.

—Diane Seals

THE FORUM (Los Angeles): **Sting** defeated **Mike Rotundo** by disqualification . . . **Steve Williams** downed **Rick Steiner** . . . **Jimmy Garvin** pinned **Kevin Sullivan** . . . **Larry Zbyszko** and **Dick Murdoch** battled to a double-countout . . . **Nikita Koloff** pinned **Al Perez** . . . **The Fantastics** defeated **The Midnight Express** & **Jim Cornette** in a bunkhouse tag match . . . **Rick Steiner** pinned **Jose Rossand** . . . **Dusty Rhodes, Lex Luger, Paul Ellering,** & **The Road Warriors** defeated **The Four Horsemen** & **J.J. Dillon.**

—Jesse Palacios

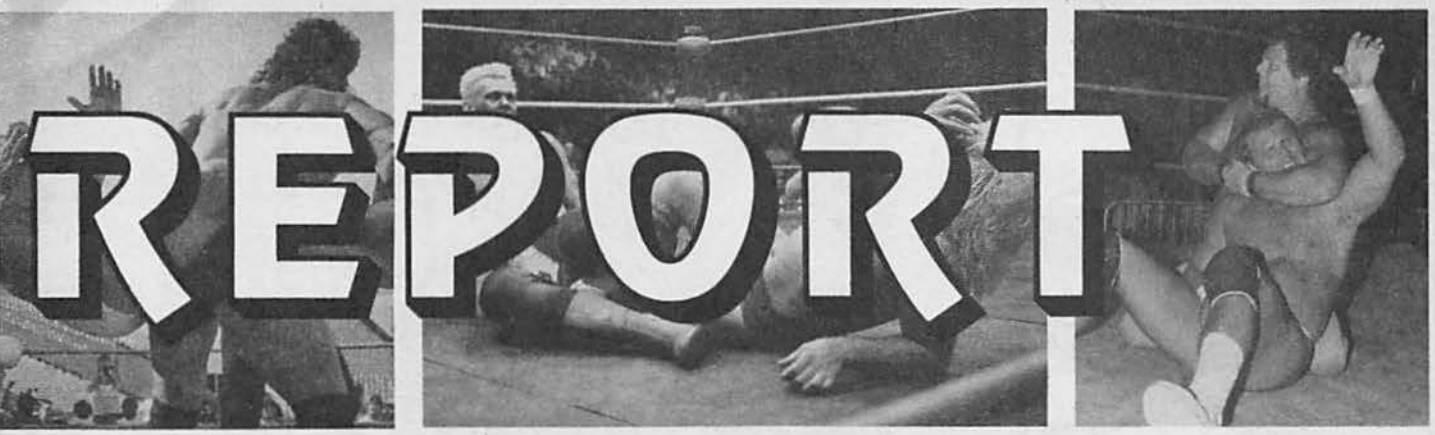
FREDERICK COMMUNITY COLLEGE (Frederick, MD): **S.D. Jones** trounced **George Skaaland** . . . **Iron Mike Sharpe** defeated **Bill Woods** . . . **Don Muraco** defeated **Greg Valentine** by disqualification . . . **Bad News Brown** beat **Koko B. Ware** . . . **The Rockers** downed **The Conquistadors.**

—Sonya Vangosen

MACK CENTER (Las Vegas): **Jimmy Garvin** defeated **Larry Zbyszko** . . . **Al Perez** destroyed **Kendall Windham** . . . **Ron Garvin** battled **Dick Murdoch** to a draw . . . **The Fantastics** beat **The Midnight Express** & **Jim Cornette** in a bunkhouse match . . . **Mike Rotundo** defeated **Kendall Windham** (substituting for **Steve Williams**) . . . **The Road Warriors** beat **Ivan Koloff** & **The Russian Assassin** in a scaffold match . . . **Nikita Koloff** & **Sting** defeated **Tully Blanchard** & **Arn Anderson** by disqualification . . . **Lex Luger** & **Dusty Rhodes** defeated **Ric Flair** & **Barry Windham** when Luger pinned Windham.

—Chris Cugini

MILWAUKEE COUNTY STADIUM (Milwaukee): **Hulk Hogan** defeated **Andre the Giant** in a steel cage match . . . **Randy Savage** pinned **Ted DiBiase** . . . **Jake Roberts** and **Rick Rude** battled to a double-countout . . . **Hacksaw Duggan** downed **The Honky Tonk Man** by disqualification . . . **Curt Hennig** beat **Terry Taylor** . . . **Demolition** beat **The British Bulldogs** . . . **The Ultimate Warrior** stuffed **Bobby Heenan** into a weasel suit after defeating him with a sleeperhold . . . **Brutus Beefcake** defeated **Hercules** . . . **Bad News Brown** defeated **Bret Hart** . . . **Warlord** & **Barbarian** destroyed **The Bolsheviks** . . .



Dino Bravo pinned **Ken Patera** . . . **King Haku** beat **Sam Houston** . . . **The Rougeaus** defeated **The Killer Bees** . . . **Jim Neidhart** downed **Lanny Poffo** . . . **Big Bossman** thrashed **Scott Casey**.

—Kevin Obry

PALACE OF AUBURN HILLS (Auburn Hills, MI): **Randy Savage** beat **Ted DiBiase** by countout . . . **The Ultimate Warrior** defeated **The Honky Tonk Man** by disqualification . . . **Demolition** destroyed **The British Bulldogs** . . . **Greg Valentine** pinned **Don Muraco** . . . **The Rougeau Brothers** defeated **The Hart Foundation** . . . **Big Bossman** pinned **Ken Patera** . . . **Bad News Brown** pinned **Koko B. Ware** . . . **George Steele** beat **Danny Davis** by countout.

—Ron Giofu

PHILADELPHIA CIVIC CENTER (Philadelphia): **Ron Simmons** & **Brad Armstrong** wrestled to a draw with **Mike Rotundo** & **Rick Steiner** . . . **The Fantastics** defeated **The Sheepherders** . . . **Sting**, **Steve Williams**, **Rick Morton**, & **Brad Armstrong** defeated **Larry Zbyszko**, **Tully Blanchard**, **Arn Anderson**, & **Al Perez** as Sting pinned Zybszko . . . **Barry Windham** defeated **Nikita Koloff** by countout . . . **Dusty Rhodes** pinned **The Russian Assassin** . . . **The Road Warriors** defeated **The Midnight Express** by disqualification . . . **Lex Luger** defeated **Ric Flair** by disqualification.

—Bobby Dial

PORTLAND SPORTS ARENA (Portland, OR): **The Grappler** pinned **C.W. Bergstrom** . . . **Buddy Rose** & **The Avalanche** defeated **Billy Two Eagles** & **Art Barr** . . . **Top Gun** pinned **Art Cruz** . . . **Scott Peterson** and **Mike Golden** wrestled to a draw . . . **Al Madril** pinned **Art Barr**.

—Ryan Williams

SEATTLE SPORTS ARENA (Seattle, WA): **The Avalanche** crushed **Billy Two Eagles** . . . **The Southern Rockers** wrestled **Col. DeBeers** & **Buddy Rose** to a draw . . . **Mike Golden** defeated **The Grappler** by disqualification . . . **Larry Zbyszko** pinned **Kendall Windham** . . . **Al Perez** scored a victory over **Mighty Wilbur** by forfeit . . . **Sting** & **Dick Murdoch** defeated **Ron Garvin** & **Ivan Koloff** . . . **Jimmy Garvin** beat **Kevin Sullivan** in a taped-fist match . . . **The Fantastics** downed **The Midnight Express** & **Jim Cornette** in a bunkhouse match . . . **Mike Rotundo** and **Steve Williams** wrestled to a double-countout . . . **Lex Luger**, **Nikita Koloff**, & **The Road Warriors** defeated **The Four Horsemen** in a steel cage match.

—Chris Keltner & Darrin Dwyer

THE SPORTATORIUM (Dallas): **Manuel Villalobos** slammed **Jim Richardson** . . . **Steven Casey** defeated **Black Bart** by disqualification . . . **Jimmy Jack Funk** pinned **Matt Borne** . . . **Iceman Parsons** lost to **Bill Irwin** by disqualification . . . **Kevin Von Erich** defeated **Kamala** by disqualification due to outside interference by Parsons and **Gen. Skandor Akbar** . . . **Steve Cox** & **Michael Hayes** defeated **The Samoan Swat Team** by pinfall.

—Viva Charles

UPPER PENINSULA STATE FAIR GRANDSTAND (Escanaba, MI): **Ricky Rice**, **John Paul**, & **Baron Von Raschke** defeated **Bad Company** & **Ray Stevens** . . . **Sgt. Slaughter** pinned **Soldat Ustinov** . . . **Greg Gagne** defeated **Teijho Kahn** by disqualification . . . **Madusa Miceli** pinned **Ondi Austin** . . . **Stoney Burke** and **Terminator Rigs** battled to a draw.

—Jesse Anderson

UTAH COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS (Spanish Fork, UT): **Steve Gatorwolf** pinned **Mark Starr** . . . **Madusa Miceli** pinned **Susan Sexton** with the help of the ropes . . . **Wahoo McDaniel** pinned **Teijho Kahn** . . . **John Paul** & **Ricky Rice** defeated **Bad Company** by disqualification.

—Wade Bills

VIKING HALL (Bristol, TN): **Owen Hart** pinned **Barry Horowitz** . . . **George Steele** defeated **Danny Davis** by countout . . . **Dino Bravo** defeated **Ken Patera** by forfeit . . . **Jake Roberts** pinned **Rick Rude** . . . **Ron Bass** destroyed **Hillbilly Jim** . . . **Demolition** beat **The British Bulldogs** . . . **Hacksaw Duggan** defeated **Ted DiBiase**.

—John Edwards

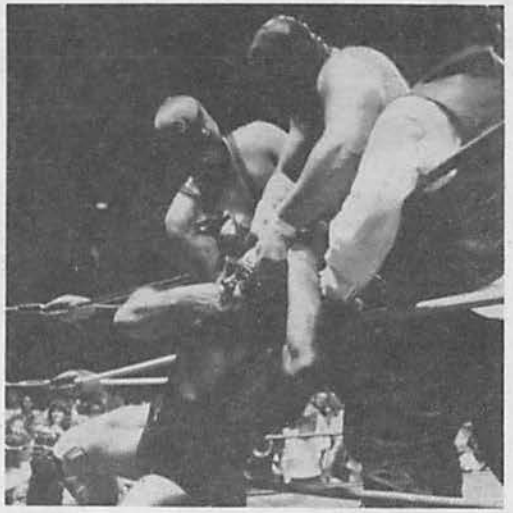
RECAP: It was a very good month for **Warlord** and **Barbarian** as they defeated **The Bolsheviks** in several arenas across the country . . . The war between NWA World champion **Ric Flair** and **Lex Luger** rages on, with Flair barely escaping with his title on many occasions . . . Upset of the month: **The Conquistadors** scored a clean pinfall victory over **The Rockers** in Manchester, New Hampshire . . . **Madusa Miceli** had a good month defending her AWA women's title, scoring wins over **Susan Sexton**, **Ondi Austin**, and **Magnificent Mimi** . . . **Jake Roberts** is emerging as the clear winner in his feud with **Rick Rude**. □

VOLUME IX No. 10 OCTOBER 1988

WRESTLING ENQUIRER

IVAN KOLOFF SPLITS WITH PAUL JONES

"Battle Of Russia" Looms As Nikita Hints At Reunion With Uncle



The Russian Assassins, at the behest of Paul Jones, choke Ivan Koloff with a chain.

By GERSH KUNTZMAN

ALBANY, GA—Ivan Koloff left manager Paul Jones' stable following a dispute with the manager and The Russian Assassin during the September 7 "Clash of the Champions" card here, and a battle for Russian wrestling supremacy now looms for the coming months.

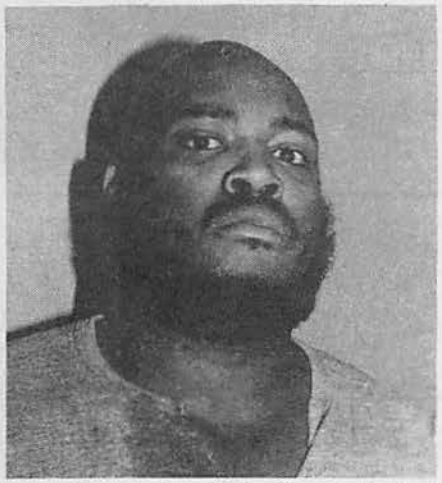
With Ivan rumored to be ready to reunite with his nephew Nikita Koloff, it appears that the Koloffs will take on Russian Assassin I and newcomer Russian Assassin II in a series of grudge matches. Russian Assassin II joined Assassin I in a brutal attack on Ivan after Koloff lost a chain match to Ricky Morton. Paul Jones was apparently perturbed that Koloff did not follow his orders and a shoving match ensued.

"Ivan Koloff will rue the day that he did not listen to me," said an irate Jones in a postmatch interview. "The beating he took from my men is only the beginning. Now The Russian Assassins will rule the NWA and the Koloffs will be their first victims."

Ivan, who was badly beaten with a chain, was undergoing medical treatment and not available for comment. Nikita had teamed with Steve Williams earlier in the evening to defeat The Sheepherders, but afterward admitted that he was more concerned with his uncle's well-being.

"Blood is thicker than water, and if he want my help, I will give it to him," Nikita said. "He is ready to admit past mistakes. That is good."

Leroy Brown Dead of Stroke



Leroy Brown, a.k.a. Elijah Akeem, was best known as a member of The Zambuie Express.

By BILL APTER

SAVANNAH, GA—Leroy Brown, who also wrestled under the name Elijah Akeem, died in a hospital here on September 6 after suffering a stroke.

Brown had been scheduled to team with long-time partner Ray Candy, a.k.a. Kareem Muhammad, on an independent card in Savannah on August 27 but failed to appear. When Candy called Brown's home, he was informed by Brown's wife Joanne that Leroy was in the hospital suffering from a stroke. He was never released from the hospital and died nine days later.

Brown, 37, is survived by his wife and two children. The Chicago native started wrestling in 1975 and is credited with being the first of the modern-day wrestlers to use music for his entrance.

At 6'5", 310 pounds, Brown was one of the largest men in wrestling. While billing himself as Elijah Akeem, he formed the highly successful tag team The Zambuie Express with Kareem Muhammad.

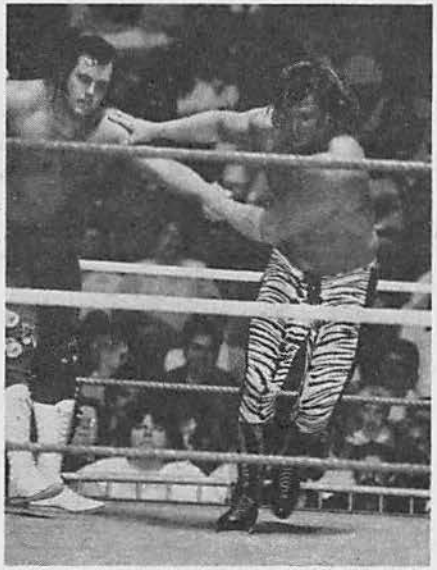
Beefcake Requests Title Match

By ANDY RODRIGUEZ

NEW YORK, NY—Brutus Beefcake's chances of winning the WWF Intercontinental title were temporarily sidelined when Ultimate Warrior, substituting for the injured Beefcake, defeated The Honky Tonk Man for the belt at SummerSlam 88, but WWF insiders report that "The Barber" has requested a match against the new champ.

"Beefcake feels that since Ultimate Warrior took his title shot at SummerSlam, Ultimate should offer him a match before anyone else," said *Wrestling Enquirer's* WWF source. "But since the WWF is hesitant to schedule fan favorite vs. fan favorite matches, it looks like Honky Tonk will get most of the title matches for now."

Beefcake had to pull out of his August 29 date with Honky Tonk at Madison Square Garden because of injuries he sustained when Ron Bass raked his scalp with a pair of boot spurs in Wheeling, West Virginia. Because of the title change, Beefcake is scheduled for a series of grudge matches against Bass.



Brutus Beefcake (whipping The Honky Tonk Man across the ring) reportedly wants title shots at The Ultimate Warrior.

The Ultimate Warrior defeated Honky Tonk in a record 31 seconds.

A Challenge For Sting, Ultimate Warrior

By STU SAKS

DENVER, CO—Rick Bassman, the manager who first brought Sting and The Ultimate Warrior into the national spotlight as members of Power Team USA, has issued a challenge to his former proteges, whom he calls "cowards."

"They owe it all to me," said Bassman, who now manages under the name Rick Golden. "I discovered them. I took two exceptional bodies and four left feet, put them into the ring, and turned out two efficient, well-oiled machines."

Bassman called Sting and Ultimate "dishonest, disloyal, conniving, insensitive, noncommital, unappreciative, lazy ingrates," and issued the challenge in the name of his tag team The Golden Rule—Mark Miller a 6'3", 290-pounder known as "The Legend," and Greg Boyd, a 6'7", 315-pounder known as "The Myth."

"The two gentlemanly cowards seem to have found homes, albeit unfortunately apart from one another," Bassman said. "They are stationary targets. Now, perhaps, The Golden Rule will find the opportunity to extract revenge, first from one and then the other. And how sweet that revenge would be!"

AROUND THE GLOBE

CALGARY, ALBERTA

North American champion Makhan Singh faces a suspension from Stampede officials following a series of attacks by "Karachi Vice" on top challenger Steve DiSalvo. DiSalvo, a friend of Singh's, was granted the title matches by Makhan "in the spirit of competitiveness." But DiSalvo was attacked by Vulkan Singh, Gama Singh, Jerry Morrow, The Cuban Assassin, and Goldie Rogers, when on the verge of victory in each match. "We feel that Makhan Singh has engineered these attacks and that will not be tolerated," said Stampede promoter Stu Hart. "It doesn't matter that he is champion. He must play by the rules."

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

Nancy Colon, wife of wrestler Carlos Colon, is considering a lawsuit against former WWC heavyweight champ Hercules Ayala, who attacked her during the World Wrestling Council's awards dinner at the Candlelight Restaurant here. Ayala, incensed that he did not receive the Heavyweight Wrestler of the Year award, stormed the stage, hit Nancy, and knocked her down. Ayala was later stripped of the belt. "That's still not enough," Mrs. Colon said. "I'm not a wrestler and this wasn't a wrestling ring. What he did is against the law."

TOKYO, JAPAN

Bruiser Brody's wife, Barbara Goodish, presented her husband's chain to Stan Hansen during the Brody Memorial card on August 29 at Budokan Hall here. Hansen retired his trademark whip and will use the chain in Japan to honor Brody. Before a crowd of over 14,000, Hansen defeated Abdullah the Butcher by disqualification when Jimmy Snuka interfered.

THE *PWI* POLL

Each month, *Pro Wrestling Illustrated* will conduct a poll on a controversial issue in the sport today. The results present a multifaceted view of public opinion that offers valuable insights into the views of your fellow fans

THE SUBJECT: SUMMERSLAM 88

IF POLLS LIKE these are any indication, SummerSlam 88 was a wrestling show with something for everyone. Of course, the results of the poll were slightly less objective than usual. In previous months, we've compiled our results from 1,000 random calls to our subscribers. This month, however, our results reflect answers from 1,000 subscribers who had seen SummerSlam (culled from subscription lists; statistical margin of error plus or minus three percent).

That means that the respondents in this month's poll are WWF fans, and their answers to questions such as "Was SummerSlam worth paying for?" must be considered in this context. Consider, for example, that 87 percent responded that SummerSlam *was* worth the $14.95 pay-per-view cost; is a fan who dislikes the WWF likely to order a special show that's going to cost extra money?

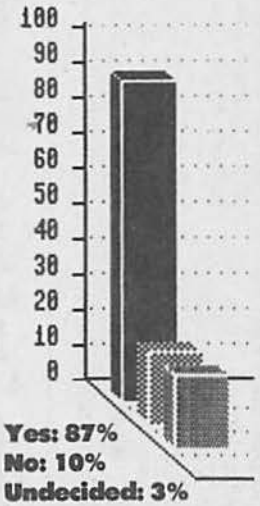
On some questions, however, differences of opinion within this homogeneous group became clear. On the question of Elizabeth's striptease act, only 28 percent showed approval; most fans expressed disappointment that such a significant main event had to end with such sexist shenanigans.

The future of The Megapowers appears to be uncertain—at least according to those fans we surveyed. Nearly half of those surveyed—48 percent—believe that The Megapowers will split up in at least six months due to internal tensions; 49 percent say they won't.

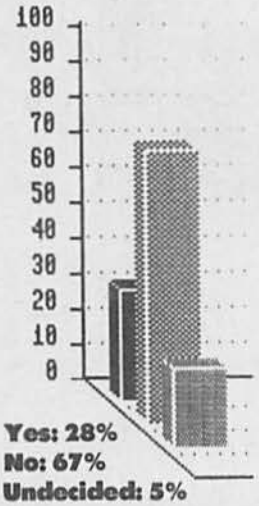
The fans were more decisive on questions dealing with the new Intercontinental champion, The Ultimate Warrior. Only 13 percent thought that Warrior should have been disqualified for his pre-bell attack of The Honky Tonk Man. Yet while most thought Warrior won the belt fairly, a majority also believed that his title reign would be short; 63 percent of those polled thought his title reign would last less than six months, indicating that while they were happy to see Honky Tonk get squashed, most fans realize that Warrior is not the wrestler to eclipse Honky Tonk's record-length I-C reign.

A majority of those polled also believed that special referee Jesse Ventura did a poor job in the main event; few, apparently, were willing to forgive "The Body's" slow three-count that ended the match.

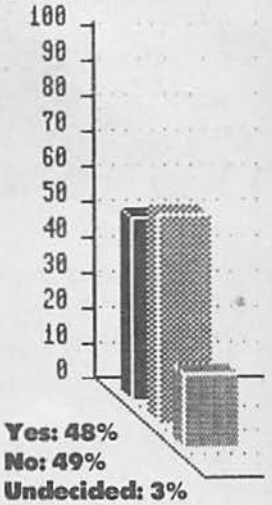
Overall, was SummerSlam 88 worth paying for?



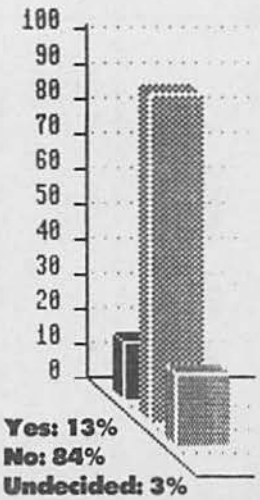
Was Elizabeth's "striptease" behavior appropriate?



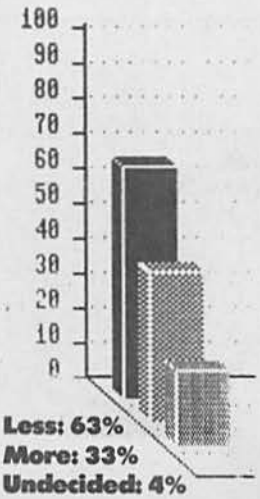
Will The Megapowers split up in less than six months due to internal strife?



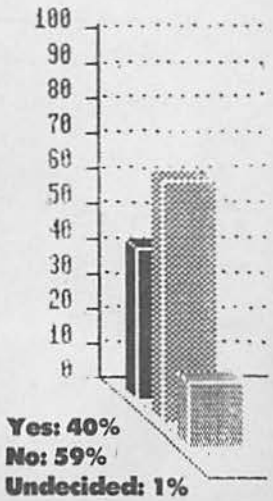
Should Ultimate Warrior have been disqualified for his pre-bell attack?



Will Ultimate Warrior's title reign last less or more than six months?



Was Jesse Ventura a fair referee in the main event?



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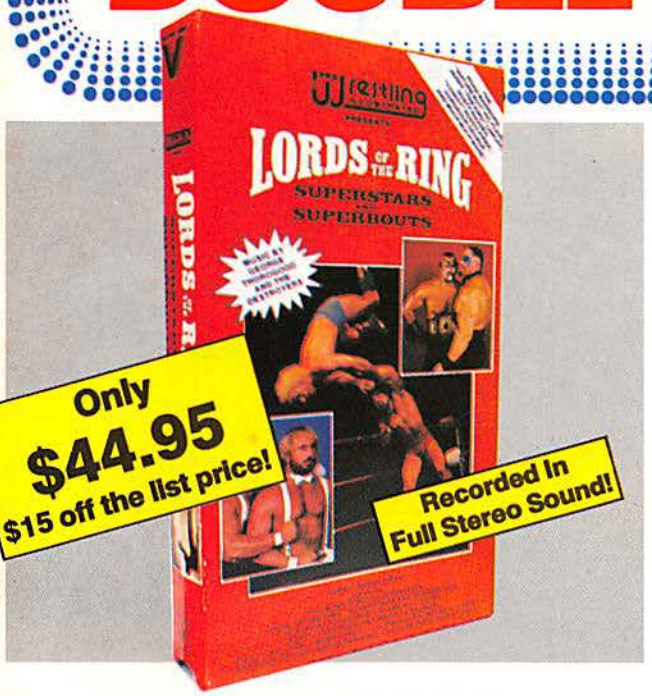

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